RBST

Rare Breeds Survival Trust

Annual Report

& FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2023

CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 269442

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1204694

#NativeBreedsForModernNeeds

RBST
Rare Breeds Survival Trust

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Rumpless Game chicken. Photograph: David Gore

Cover photograph: Albion cow. Photograph: Florence Mannerings

Our goals and what we're doing to achieve them

Goal: A reverse in the decline of all livestock breeds on the Watchlist

What: We aim to have all the breeds on the Watchlist stable by 2028

How:

- We are refocusing our messaging showing the economic, social and environmental relevance of native breeds.
- We use the latest technology to save our rarest breeds, as with the British Lop Pig Project. What we learn from this project will be applied to the benefit of other breeds.
- We will continue to equip breeders and potential breeders with the knowledge they need to keep animals through our Grazing Animals Project courses and online resources.
- We are identifying 'Priority Breeds' and creating Conservation Plans for each of them.

Goal: A comprehensive up-to-date Gene Bank

What: The RBST Gene Bank is the charity's single biggest investment and a key national asset. We will work towards making this a National Gene Bank, supported by government

How:

- We are implementing a clear strategy which will support the maintenance and acquisition of animals to ensure the future of our native breeds.
- We need to ensure that the original genetics are preserved and can be drawn on in the future.
- We are actively promoting the importance of the Gene Bank to potential donors and funders and will ensure that its importance is widely understood.

Goal: Livestock genetic diversity recognised by government and wider society as a fundamental element of agricultural and biodiversity policy

What: We lobby for genetic diversity to be recognised in government policies such as the Agriculture Act, Rural Development Policy and Biodiversity Policy

How:

- We are joining formal partnerships and networks to highlight the many benefits of our native breeds.
- Our strategic work will build on our good media profile to ensure that native breeds are recognised in policy as being crucial to bringing greater sustainability to modern farming and land management practices.
- Our volunteer network represents us at shows and highlights the range of rare breeds that exist and their many and varied uses to the public.

A message from our Chairman

John Atkinson
Chairman

As our 50th anniversary year, 2023 was an important one for RBST.

It gave us the opportunity to look back, and give recognition to our founders who saw the urgent need to ensure that our native livestock breeds were protected, and to look forward to the role those breeds can play in our changing agricultural landscape.

The farming environment now is very different from that of the 1970s, when RBST was founded. The contrast is well exemplified when you consider that the 'gene bank' that Sir Solly Zuckerman wanted to preserve was housed in Whipsnade Zoo and native breeds' place in mainstream farming was disappearing. Today our diverse native breeds are where they deserve to be – in our diverse landscapes. With the changing economic climate in agriculture and the move to more regenerative systems, natives are showing how perfectly suited they are to low-cost, environmentally-friendly farming systems. The proof is in the number of new breeders now contacting RBST for help in sourcing suitable stock.

Of course, when you are celebrating a milestone anniversary, it can be all too easy to focus on past history. RBST didn't do that. While we recognised the debt we owe to the charity's founders and all of those who have worked so determinedly to save our rare breeds from extinction, 2023 was about looking forward and ensuring that we have a clear vision of where we need to go from here.

We achieved a lot in 2023. Our voice is being heard at government level, which is essential if our native breeds are to have an integral part in the future of UK farming. Together, as an organisation, we have engaged with a huge audience from grass roots to government levels and there can be no doubt that over the past year, RBST's profile has been well and truly raised. In fact, I don't think we have ever had such a significant media presence.

Our celebratory events took us all over the United Kingdom, starting, for me, on home ground in Cumbria and then to Cornwall and East Anglia with a very special reception at the House of Lords along the way. In addition to this, RBST Northern Ireland took the Trust back to Balmoral for the first time in many years and RBST Scotland put on an excellent show at the Royal Highland as well as taking the RBST message to the Scottish Parliament. All around the country, our dedicated and enthusiastic support groups flew the RBST flag at their local and regional shows and personally, I was invited to speak at events from the Highlands of Scotland to the Channel Islands.

As an organisation, RBST is extremely fortunate to have an active and committed membership. In the run-up to our anniversary year, we wrote to our life members and many of our longstanding members inviting them to contribute towards the costs of celebrating our 50th anniversary. I was blown away by the generosity, which raised two and half times what we were expecting and would like to express my gratitude.

That gratitude also extends to our Board of Trustees and our President Baroness (Sue) Hayman and Vice Presidents Martin Beard, Elizabeth Buchanan, Alan Black, Lord De La Warr, Jimmy Doherty and Lord Iliffe.

I want to conclude by expressing my deepest thanks to everyone who works so hard on behalf of our breeds.

A message from our Chief Executive Officer

Christopher Price
CEO

2023 was, of course, RBST's 50th Anniversary which we marked with a series of events at the core of which were two objectives.

The first was to promote native breed produce, both food and fibre, across the different regions of the country, showing the commercial viability of native breeds alongside the quality of their produce.

The second was to demonstrate that RBST is an influential UK-wide organisation with a network of impressive high-profile partners and stakeholders.

We exceeded our expectations on both. Across the country, we promoted local breeds and their produce to a whole range of consumers, retailers, influencers and decision makers operating at all scales.

Moreover, we were able to fund the whole programme through member donations. Our appeal to life, and other longstanding, members yielded almost three times what we were expecting.

2023 also saw the emphasis of our conservation strategy changing in two overlapping aspects. Firstly we focussed much more on supporting breeders and breed societies across the board, rather than looking at individual breeds. In essence RBST wants to create the space within which breed societies can do what they do best: conserve and promote their breeds.

This tied in with the second aspect: working with each of the UK governments to ensure that their new agriculture and environment policies properly recognise the importance of our native livestock and equines. In England the Defra Minister set up a Ministerial Native Breeds Round Table to take a more strategic approach, looking at a variety of government activities, including support for abattoirs and research funding, not just direct support.

The other three countries, dependant as they are on Westminster for setting the framework, have not got quite so far, but RBST is engaged with all of them, making the case for native breeds.

And as RBST Treasurer Martin Penny makes clear, RBST's adoption of a long-term approach to business planning, acknowledging the risk of short-term volatility, meant that RBST was in a much more robust position than may otherwise have been the case.

This, combined with increases in most of our income sources and the effective management of cost control, has resulted in another financially secure year. The priority continues to be ensuring that every pound our members and others give is used in effectively delivering RBST's agenda.

Of course, we cannot do everything ourselves. RBST depends on its members to get things done, some as individuals, some as members of support groups – the groups set up by the Board to help RBST deliver its objectives. The work they do throughout the year all contributes to RBST's effectiveness.

RBST Scotland had another excellent year. The team's new approach to show attendance, having a smaller tent near the showing lines and running events and seminars for those already involved with livestock keeping, proved particularly successful.

The new RBST Northern Ireland showed a similar dynamism at the Balmoral Show, partnering with a range of sustainable farming groups to ensure RBST's messages reached a wider audience.

The way in which so many support groups and others within the wider membership are stepping up and looking at new ways of doing things to ensure that RBST retains its relevance is incredibly encouraging.

So huge thanks to everyone involved: our President, vice presidents, trustees, members and, in particular, our wonderful staff team: Claire McNicol, Tom Blunt, Andrea Parry-Jones, Jo Linford, Rachel Peckover and Hannah Roberts, and our two communications advisers Linda Trotman and Isobel Davidson.

A message from our Chair of Conservation & Research Committee

Claire Saunders
Chair of Conservation & Research Committee

RBST's Conservation & Research Committee had another full year supporting the Trust's work conserving and promoting our native livestock breeds.

Most of the breeds came into being to meet human needs in our landscape and climate, and promoting the uses of the breeds lies at the core of RBST's conservation strategy.

We were particularly excited in 2023 to start working more closely with the Wool Board promoting the wool from our native breeds. Working with breed societies, if we can collect the entire clip from the breed so it can be processed and sold at scale, it reduces costs and makes the wool more attractive to purchasers.

Whilst food and clothing may be the traditional benefits of livestock, the various breeds' grazing impacts are now just as highly valued, and RBST's conservation team has been working hard to promote the specific benefits of native livestock and equines. We have been overwhelmed by the popularity of our LANTRA-approved conservation grazing and livestock management courses. Similarly our consultancy service advising generally larger landowners on reintroducing native breeds went from strength to strength.

The roll out of the new agricultural support mechanisms across the four UK countries provided RBST with a once in a generation opportunity to ensure that the conservation and promotion of native breeds was fully embedded in each country's policy.

In England, the new farming minister, Mark Spencer, set up a Ministerial Native Breeds Round Table to ensure his department's work was properly co-ordinated, with each of the relevant teams engaging.

2023 saw further details of Welsh Government's proposals including the commitment to introduce so much of what RBST has been calling for: direct financial incentives for keeping pedigree registered stock, government support for selling native breed products and using native breeds in delivering environmental benefits and direct promotion of the benefits of rare and native breeds.

In Scotland, RBST fed into the new Agriculture Bill. The Bill gives the Scottish government the powers to do everything we would want it to. The challenge now is to ensure that all those powers are properly used.

In Northern Ireland we continue to challenge the Government's policy of reducing livestock emissions through early slaughter, something that would have an horrendous impact on slower finishing native breeds. RBST maintains that emissions can be better reduced by reducing overall numbers, focusing on breeds that thrive outdoors on grass, improving overall health and welfare and adopting breeding practices that improve efficiency without compromising breed standards.

The state of the local abattoir network continued to be a significant focus of activity across the UK. We need a network capable of processing small numbers of non-standard animals to the highest welfare standards, or we will not just lose our native breeds we will lose sustainable livestock farming entirely.

Finally, there are those breeds that face particular challenges, and whose situation is such that Government support alone will not be enough to secure their future.

Some of our work has been through overarching projects, such our equine project generously funded by the Horserace Betting Levy Board looking at the breeding and uses of native equines. We have been delighted with the level of engagement from both breeders and breed societies alike. Our wool project looked at the role of wool as a carbon sink, with a view to ensuring farm carbon calculators better reflect the full position.

Others are projects directed at individual breeds, where we are working with our friends in the breed societies and breeders' groups to support the likes of North Ronaldsay sheep, Exmoor ponies and the British Lop and Large White pigs.

As with all RBST's work, many, many people contribute to our success, but I would like to pay particular thanks to my fellow trustees on the Conservation & Research Committee, the staff conservation team, and of course all the breed societies and dedicated individuals who work so hard to sustain and develop our breeds.

A message from our Treasurer

Martin Penny
Treasurer

When I took over as RBST Treasurer in October 2023 I was pleased to find that the finances were both healthy and well managed.

In terms of financial performance in 2023, RBST was operating within the UK economy that had grown by only 0.1%. Nevertheless, RBST delivered an overall increase in income and with the continuing efficient management of costs meant that financial stability was maintained.

To a significant extent this was the result of RBST's long term approach to business planning. The risk of periods of short-term volatility are factored into projections so that it is prepared for and able to weather the challenges.

The two items most prone to volatility are investment income and legacy donations. They are both subject to relatively large variations from one year to the next, but because of RBST's long term approach, the potential risks can be better identified and managed.

Overall in 2023 investment income was up 3% against budget to £114,168. RBST chooses to hold monies in investments, rather than cash deposit accounts, in order to maximise investment income. This ensures returns can then be applied to delivering the Trust's charitable objectives.

The level of volatility with legacies remains high and RBST monitors these on a regular basis to ascertain when income will be received. 2023 saw a legacy income of £124,199 compared with £72,067 in 2022 – an increase of 72.3%

In terms of other income 2023 continued the positive trend from 2022, with grants and donations, charitable activities and advertising revenue all seeing increases and membership subscriptions holding steady. The increase in grants and donations to £151,475 compared with £119,090 in 2022 was particularly gratifying. The amount exceeded expectations and is a reflection of the incredible ongoing generosity of RBST's members.

The ever-increasing popularity of RBST's livestock management and grazing courses provided more good news, with the income increasing by over 100% from £55,661 in 2022 to £120,708 in 2023.

Total expenditure for 2023 increased by 5.3% to £699,259 compared with £664,201 in 2022. This reflects an annual inflation rate for the UK of 7.3% in 2023 and additional costs related to the increases in charitable and fundraising activities. Costs continued to be kept under close control.

In terms of the capital performance of investments recent years have been particularly volatile. 2023 saw an investment gain of £33,103, compared with an investment loss of £294,184 in 2022 and a gain of £383,886 in 2021. It is important to recognise these are unrealised gains or losses i.e. the gain or loss has not been crystalised. Rather it is a snapshot of the position at the end of the financial year

Restricted funds continued to grow, reaching £115,489 compared with £105,231 in 2022, reflecting the Trust's ongoing success in applying for project funding. We are, of course, immensely grateful to the charitable trusts and foundations that supported our work, including the Horserace Betting Levy Board project and the Foundation for Common Land.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to all of those who have contributed to RBST's finances over the year; our members, our corporate sponsors who recognise their business goals and objectives align with our own, those who so kindly chose to remember us in their will, and last but not least the finance team of RBST. Thank you to you all.

RBST

Promoting our native breeds

A Clydesdale mare and foal. Photograph courtesy of Malcolm Snelgrove, www.malcolmsnelgrove.com, www.stepoutmoor.com

Promoting our native breeds

> ***In 2023, RBST marked its milestone 50th anniversary by celebrating the story of our charity and the heritage of our native breeds while placing them firmly in the context of modern farming.***

While looking back with pride, we are also able to look forward with confidence that our native breeds are re-establishing their place in the UK's farming environment.

When RBST was founded, 'modern' farming was all about the drive for productivity, with the focus on producing more food, faster. Some traditional breeds had already disappeared, others were heading that way. Against this background, the founders were dedicated to preserving the genetics and traits represented by our diverse native breeds 'because one day we might need them'. Arguably that day is approaching – or perhaps it has already arrived.

RBST now has to look beyond saving the valuable genetics of our native breeds to ensuring a wider understanding of just why they are valuable – highlighting their 'adaptive potential'. To do that, we must find markets for their products where possible, lobby government for support and, for those breeds of priority concern, work with their respective breed societies to turn things around. These aims have been the drivers of the various activities RBST has been involved in during 2023.

The commercial opportunities and environmental benefits of keeping native breeds were showcased at a series of 50th anniversary events hosted at Rheged in Cumbria, The Lost Gardens of Heligan in Cornwall, Jimmy's Farm and Wildlife Park in Suffolk, and Tannaghmore Farm Park in Northern Ireland. RBST even took its message to the Houses of Parliament for a 50th anniversary reception, discussing with key Ministers how our native breeds can fulfil their potential in food, farming and environmental management today and tomorrow.

As well as hosting these special anniversary events, RBST continued its presence at events aimed at its target audience of sustainable and regenerative farmers, where with a growing focus on farming working with nature to meet both our food and environmental needs, native breeds are increasingly finding themselves front and centre stage.

ORFC

In January, RBST used the Oxford Real Farming Conference (ORFC) as the platform to put the case for wool to a 130-strong audience.

The ORFC sits alongside the main international Oxford Farming Conference and represents the unofficial gathering of the agroecological farming movement in the UK, including organic and regenerative farming. It brings together practising farmers and growers with scientists, economists, activists and policy makers.

Groundswell

The summer saw RBST return to Groundswell, the event that provides a forum for farmers and anyone interested in food production or the environment to learn about the theory and practical applications of conservation agriculture or regenerative systems.

Groundswell is a prime opportunity for RBST to showcase native breeds and their suitability for a range of farming systems. We spoke to a number of people already using native breeds and it was encouraging also to meet a number looking to invest in native breeds.

At the 2023 event RBST Chairman John Atkinson and Conservation Advisers Tom Blunt and Andrea Parry-Jones gave a presentation on climate-friendly sheep farming.

Taking the Common to Town

Over the course of 2023, RBST worked with the Foundation for Common Land (FCL) to provide a series of educational events designed to reach audiences who would not normally be likely to access the rich heritage of commoning and the native breeds involved in commoning. The events, made possible thanks to a grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, attracted over 2,100 people, helping to raise awareness of RBST and its work.

The locations where the events took place gave RBST and FCL the chance to reach a wide variety of people to help educate them about native breeds, commoning and farming in general.

Promoting our native breeds

Back to Balmoral for RBST Northern Ireland

> ***After a break of several years, RBST was once again represented at the Balmoral Show, Northern Ireland's largest agricultural event, in May 2023.***

The new Northern Ireland Support Group has been making significant progress and in order to have a stronger voice, the group has been looking to partner with other organisations involved in regenerative farming.

So, at Balmoral, members of the group joined forces with the Nature Friendly Farming Network, the National Trust, the Woodland Trust and the GrowInnovation Network (GrowIn) to form the Regenerative Farming Zone at the show. This meant that as well as having individual stands, the collaboration was able to organise a programme of speakers in its zone.

Working with partners in a larger themed zone created a lot more impact and gave RBST a greater footfall to its stand. The zone attracted a wide range of visitors, including the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris, MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and the show organisers were very impressed by the result.

Aaron Kilpatrick and Andrew Bingham of RBST NI with the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

RBST Scotland celebrates sustainability

RBST Scotland
FOOD & FARMING SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS 2023

"Excellence in Scottish sustainable food and farming was again celebrated at the 2023 Royal Highland Show when winners of the RBST Scotland Food and Farming Sustainability Awards were announced."

L-R Mary McGillivray of Eriskay Pony Society, Robin & Alison Tuke of Hardiesmill, John Bennett, Mairi Gougeon, Mags Clark of Kelso Farmers Market

L-R Neil Forbes, Jock Gibson of Macbeths, Lindsay and Andrew Duff of MacDuff 1890, Jane Brand of Richard Brand & Son at East Fortune Farm, Mairi Gougeon

The awards were presented to the winners by Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, Mairi Gougeon MSP.

The awards saw an impressive array of businesses being recognised for their efforts which play an important part in raising the profile of native breed produce and sustainable practices, with some achieving honours for the second year.

The winners of each category were chosen by two expert judging panels, one for the food categories chaired by RBST Scotland Chair Steve McMinn, and the second for the farming categories chaired by RBST Chairman John Atkinson. The panellists included creator of The Scottish Food Guide Wendy Barrie, Scotland Food and Drink's Head of Regional Food Fiona Richmond, Head of Food & Enterprise at SAC Consulting Ceri Ritchie, Head of Agricultural Holdings and the Women in Agriculture taskforce at Scottish Government Fiona Leslie, The Scottish Smallholder Festival's Rosemary Champion, and Galbraith Group's Martin Ritchie.

With RBST sponsoring the Champion of the Year award, other sponsors included Ledingham Chalmers, The Scottish Food Guide and The Scottish Smallholder Festival.

Promoting our native breeds

Working with the farm park network

> ***Over its 50 year history, RBST has worked with farm parks, starting with Founder Chairman Joe Henson's Cotswold Farm Park.***

It was the recognition of the fact that our native breeds could attract the interest of the general public when displayed in a farm setting that inspired RBST to introduce its approved farm park scheme.

The defining features of RBST approved farm parks have been their active breeding groups of Watchlist breeds and the fact that they are open to the public. They are a diverse group, varying in size and style. Some are council owned, some charity, others are privately owned and those in the Educational category are integral to educational facilities. RBST's farm park scheme also has a number of Associate members which are establishments which typically do not focus primarily on farm livestock but may keep and breed native breeds as an adjunct to their core conservation activity.

Farm parks offer an important public showcase for RBST's work with native breeds, attracting many thousands of visitors each year. In addition, many farm parks can be seen out and about at their local agricultural shows, showing off their pedigree livestock to an even wider audience. And, because they are actively involved in breeding programmes, they can be an important source of pedigree stock.

Harlings - a first in Devon

In 2023, RBST welcomed its first farm park in Devon with the accreditation of Harlings as an Education Farm Park.

Harlings is run by Abbie and Will Richardson with their son Daniel. Set in beautiful Devon landscape on the Bere Peninsula and close to the Devon/Cornwall border, the story of Harlings began in 2019. Abbie, a business and animal care provider, and Will who came from a background of commercial farming, were looking for a smallholding where they could approach farming in a completely different way.

The path they chose was 'quality, not quantity' and they put their efforts into the conservation of breeds from the RBST Watchlist to demonstrate an ethical and sustainable way of farming, with traditional British native breeds, bred responsibly. Harlings offers educational visits which are funded through the Countryside Stewardship Educational Access payments scheme. The farm is accredited by Social Farms and Gardens scheme, and carries the 'Green Care' quality mark, which shows that the team runs a safe and professional organisation, with health and safety, combined with animal welfare, at the forefront. They are also CEVAS (the Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme) trained in education and therapy for the provision of valuable skills and welfare sessions.

Promoting our native breeds

The 2023 Marsh Award heroes

Aaron Kirkpatrick

Alan Black

Jane Cooper
Photo: Cara Cooper

> ***The Marsh Awards are the creation of Mr Brian Marsh OBE, Chairman of the Marsh Charitable Trust, who wanted to support areas such as conservation and volunteering.***

MARSH Charitable Trust

The Awards programme identifies and works with partner organisations which are experts in their chosen fields. RBST has three awards: Conservation in Genetic Biodiversity, Lifetime Achievement Award, and Support Group Volunteer of the Year.

The 2023 RBST Marsh Awards went to Jane Cooper for Conservation in Genetic Bio-Diversity, the Lifetime Achievement Award to Alan Black and Support Group Volunteer 2023 was Aaron Kirkpatrick of RBST Northern Ireland.

RBST Vice President Alan Black received his Marsh Award for Lifetime Achievement to mark his many years of service to RBST in the roles of Trustee, Chairman and, since 1999, Vice President. In more recent years, Alan has also acted as Chair of the Nominations Committee, advising the Board on matters of governance and acting as guide and mentor to both trustees and staff.

His first involvement with rare breeds came through Geoffrey Cloke who was very active in both the pig world and RBST. Within a very short time, Geoffrey got him involved in RBST and he was Chairman for three years in the mid '90s. Although only having limited direct involvement with livestock keeping, Alan found empathy with the work of RBST believing that intensive farming was having a detrimental effect on indigenous livestock and believed that by becoming involved in RBST, he could do his bit to help stop that decline

Jane Cooper received her award for Conservation in Genetic Bio-Diversity for her work with Boreray sheep. Jane established her breeding flock of Borerays with sheep gathered from three tiny flocks in the Highlands. In 2017, she discovered that this meant she was custodian of the last remnants of the 'Lost Flock' of Boreray sheep which represented a genetically unique sub-group of the breed.

Through research and analysis, Jane ascertained that these sheep were from a completely separate line to other mainland sheep and in 2017 they were included in the supplementary register of the Combined Flock Book. Having gained recognition for her flock, Jane set about securing a long-term and sustainable future for the Orkney Borerays by bringing together a community of like-minded Orkney farmers and crofters who share an agroecological and sustainable ethos. The community now has Boreray flocks on four islands, increasing biosecurity, and a programme has been established designed to protect, preserve and promote the flocks, focusing on health and diversity in both genotype and phenotype within its small genetic pool.

Volunteer of the Year Aaron Kirkpatrick, from Ballygowan, County Down, was nominated for his work which has been instrumental in re-establishing the Northern Ireland Support Group. In looking to restore an active RBST presence in Northern Ireland, Support Group Secretary Aaron has engaged with old and new members and has worked to establish new networks and partnerships.

By taking a fresh and professional approach, he has worked with the Support Group to establish links with Government, the National Trust, Nature Friendly Farming Network and more whilst engaging with RBST in delivering quality conservation projects to ensure native breeds are successful in Northern Ireland.

The future of showing with RBST

Young Shepherds

Oliver Clark

Thomas Nash

> ***A record 31 young shepherds competed in the finals of the RBST Young Shepherd of the Year Award 2023, impressing competition judge Edward Lambert who said that with the level of skill on show in RBST's 50th year, the future of showing is safe for the next 50 years.***

The finals were held at the English Winter Fair at the Staffordshire Showground.

The competition is designed for shepherds to develop and display their showing skills and has offered many youngsters their first opportunity to enter the showring, with some returning to the competition year-on-year as their enthusiasm has grown.

With 18 finalists in the Junior class and 13 Seniors, this was the highest entry for a finals since the competition began. After careful deliberation, Edward awarded the Junior championship to Oliver Clark, with Thomas Nash taking the Senior championship and when these champions returned to the ring, it was Thomas who was declared overall winner, becoming the RBST Young Shepherd 2023. Taking reserve places were Elise Rochford in the Juniors and Rosie Burt in the Seniors.

Asking the ringside crowd to give a round of applause for all of the finalists, Edward made the point that, having qualified for the finals, all of the competitors had come to the show as winners. He said: "It's been an honour to judge this competition. These finalists travelled from all over the country to be here and quite honestly, I think they could show the adults a thing or two. I was impressed both by the exceptional handling skills on display and by the competitors' knowledge of their sheep – we can certainly have confidence in our shepherds of the future."

RBST

Securing Government support

A Castlemilk Moorit from the Barby Flock.

> ***RBST continues to seek a policy environment that supports and encourages farming with native breeds and keeping native equine breeds.***

In December 2022 the 15th meeting of the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), otherwise known as COP15, took place in Montreal Canada which saw a historic deal being struck to halt the global loss of biodiversity by 2030.

Following the two-week meeting, a package of measures was agreed which are described as 'deemed critical to addressing the dangerous loss of biodiversity and restoring natural ecosystems'. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework included four overarching goals and 23 targets for achievement by 2030. The UK was one of the signatories to the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Conference agreement, which contains some extremely valuable points on native livestock conservation.

The UK government has the ability to lead the way in delivering on the promises enshrined in the framework agreement, which has been described as a 'once-in-a-decade deal to halt the destruction of Earth's ecosystems'. A shift to nature and climate-friendly farming with native breeds at its heart will play a key part in the conservation of our native livestock, moving them into the serious mainstream of farming with 'big-picture' credibility.

As a signatory to the framework, the UK government is formally obliged to act on these goals and targets, amongst which are some useful points on native livestock conservation. With native breeds' advocacy at government level high on the RBST agenda, we are, with the support of our President Baroness Hayman of Ullock, challenging the government on their position on the framework and on how they plan to implement what they have agreed to.

RBST's Manifesto for Rare Breeds

In its 50th Anniversary and with a general election in sight, RBST launched the "RBST Manifesto for Native Breeds".

Our three proposals, if introduced across the four nations of the UK, would represent a sea change for the future of our native livestock. We have asked the agriculture ministers in each country for their support and we have encouraged our members to support our efforts on an individual level by writing to their MPs.

The three proposals are:

1. Recognise native livestock and equines as a key part of biodiversity and national heritage: governments must meet their international obligation for livestock biodiversity and should do this in a manner that promotes and invests in the public benefits provided by our native livestock and equines.

2. Encourage the creation of a comprehensive network of local abattoirs: governments must ensure appropriate regulation and its delivery for smaller abattoirs, and work with the industry to invest in, and support a comprehensive network of small local abattoirs.

3. Revise carcase grading: governments must alter the current legislation so carcass grading systems reflect the diversity of the UK production system and allow consumer choice

Securing Government support

Face to face with government

> ***With the key message 'Native Breeds for Modern Needs', RBST takes every opportunity to discuss the role of native breeds in a sustainable future of farming and environmental land management with the UK Governments.***

2023 delivered a number of key opportunities for RBST, its members and supporters to come face-to-face with key government representatives to deliver the message that they must make sure the conservation and promotion of native breeds is at the heart of their agriculture and environment policies.

Taking the message to the House of Lords

When RBST took its 50th anniversary celebrations to the House of Lords, an event hosted by RBST President Baroness Hayman of Ullock, it had a valuable opportunity to bring together Ministers, Peers and MPs with native breed experts to discuss the crucial role for these breeds in future farming where sustainable food production goes hand in hand with environmental land management.

Guests included ministers, MPs and peers including Farming Minister Mark Spencer MP, Shadow Farming Minister Daniel Zeichner MP, Defra Minister Lord Benyon, former Defra Secretary George Eustice MP and former EFRA Committee Chair Baroness McIntosh who joined RBST Trustees, farmers, smallholders and conservationists from across the UK to hear about the work which is helping native breeds to thrive, and to discuss why their survival and utilisation matters for food production, the environment and rural communities.

In his address to the guests, Farming Minister Mark Spencer said that the government was fully aligned with RBST's thinking regarding native breeds, describing how world events such as Covid and the war in Ukraine have put a focus on food production and security, meaning that our native breeds represent a gene bank for the future which we may need to draw on. He described RBST's work conserving and promoting the UK's native breeds as essential to protecting genetic diversity.

He also said: "A strong abattoir network is a really important part of farming with native breeds and we want to continue working with RBST to help small abattoirs to flourish. The UK has some of the best products in the world, and our native livestock breeds have an important role in high quality, sustainable food production today and for the future."

Taking the message to the House of Lords
Farming Minister Mark Spencer with RBST CEO Christopher Price

RBST Scotland at the Scottish Parliament

With the Scottish government in the process of producing its own agricultural policy, which is looking very different to what will happen elsewhere in the UK, it is vital that RBST in Scotland is engaged in the debate and has the opportunity to promote the value of native livestock and equines in the context of modern farming, the environment and food production.

In April, the RBST Scotland Support Group attended a reception held at the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood, using the opportunity to communicate RBST's core messages.

The day was organised by RBST Scotland Support Group committee member Rosemary Champion, sponsored by Jim Fairlie MSP, and was intended to give MSPs the opportunity to learn about the work of the RBST and the importance of Scotland's native livestock and equine breeds – economically, environmentally, and socially.

During his welcoming address Jim Fairlie MSP acknowledged the importance of rare and native breeds in Scottish agriculture and the role RBST has to play in promoting them. He also reflected on the growing awareness within the Scottish Government of the role native breeds have to play in future agricultural policy.

RBST at the Scottish Parliament

Securing Government support

Consultations

> ***Much of RBST's activity focuses on promoting government policies that support the keeping and breeding of native livestock, something that is particularly important at the moment as each of the four UK countries continues to roll out their new post Brexit agriculture policies. In practice we have a once in a generation opportunity to get things right.***

As a result, and as in recent years, we responded to a significant number of consultation papers put out by the governments.

Defra consulted on changes to the rules on cattle identification. We supported the proposals for simplifying the regulations and generally making enforcement more proportionate, and for moving to the introduction of a system of bovine electronic identification (BeID). However, we argued strongly that BeID should only be introduced for newborn cattle. We were concerned that any attempt to introduce it for existing herds, replacing the current tags, could result in errors, adverse welfare implications and potentially farmers regarding the exercise as so onerous they give up.

We supported Defra's proposals for reforming the rules on animal transport, agreeing that there was no need to be exporting animals for slaughter and stressing that animals should always be slaughtered as close as possible to the farm on which they are kept. We went on to note though, that this depended on there being appropriate abattoir facilities nearby, and that this was something that needed to be addressed.

We also agreed that the position was different when it came to exporting animals for breeding purposes, explaining that genetically important livestock and equines are regularly transported overseas for conservation breeding purposes, and because of the importance of the animals concerned, welfare standards inevitably accord with best practice.

In Scotland we responded to the consultation on the new Agriculture Bill. We emphasised that food was only one of the products we get from livestock. For many farmers and crofters, the production of wool, skins and hides are as important, providing significant income streams particularly in more marginal areas and this should be reflected in government policy.

As ever we highlighted the importance of the local abattoir network, explaining that without a local abattoir network there would be no sustainable livestock sector. So, investment in abattoirs should be treated as being as important as investing in core farming activities.

Towards the end of the year, the Welsh Government consulted on their new Sustainable Farming Scheme. We remained supportive of the overall direction of travel and the need to incentivise farmers to move away from intensified industrial systems, as we had been since the initial proposals, which we found the most favourable for native breeds across the UK. However, we had significant concerns about the tone of the consultation which struck us as too authoritarian and prescriptive and as such likely to alienate potential supports.

To read all of RBST's consultation responses, see the "About Us" section of the website.

The Dartmoor debate

> ***Following lobbying by rural groups including RBST, and a debate in Parliament led by West Country MPs, Defra agreed to hold an independent enquiry into controversial proposals to reduce grazing levels on Dartmoor.***

The parliamentary debate was sparked by concerns raised by farmers who graze their livestock on common land within the National Park, much of which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Natural England, the government body responsible for ensuring that SSSIs in England are in a favourable condition, has proposed a new reduced grazing regime for sheep, cattle and ponies, in connection with the renewal of Higher Level Stewardship payments. Farmers, who would have to comply with the proposed new grazing regime to continue to receive enhanced funding under the Rural Payments Agency's Environmental Stewardship scheme, have warned that reduced or no winter grazing would threaten to force them out of business and spell the end of many small family farms.

RBST has proposed two ways forward from the government point of view. Firstly it believes that there should be a pause during which the current HLS agreements are rolled over, which should include an assessment of the need to conserve the genetic diversity of the species, breeds and populations on the moor. It also proposes that financial support should be provided under s2(1) (g) Agriculture Act 2020 to incentivise the use of environmentally appropriate native breeds and populations, so helping to meet the UK's international obligations to conserve livestock genetic diversity.

Progress on smaller abattoirs

In 2020, in recognition of the crucial role that smaller abattoirs play in the native breed supply chain, RBST helped to establish the Abattoir Sector Group, an alliance crated to promote the need for a comprehensive network of local abattoirs.

Both within the group and on its own behalf, RBST has continued to run a robust campaign which, in 2023, resulted in the first positive action from government.

Shortly after confirming his support for small abattoirs at RBST's House of Lords reception, Farming Minister Mark Spencer announced the creation of a £4m fund to help the small abattoir sector invest for the future.

One of a number of measures announced on Back British Farming Day in September, the fund is designed to be used to improve productivity, enhance animal health and welfare and encourage investment in new technologies. It will be open to red meat and poultry businesses with an annual throughput of up to 10,000 livestock units, including beef, pork and lamb, and/or 500,000 birds a year.

The minister also confirmed that the government would identify opportunities to remove unnecessary burdens for small abattoirs "to make it easier for them to operate and support farmers in reaching local and international markets".

Supporting the fund's aims, RBST emphasises that the fund must also help small operators invest in the people and the skills that are needed for the future. As well as acquiring the core skills, abattoir staff also require improved training on how to reduce the overall volume of waste produced to take advantage of the potential to participate in the wider circular economy, finding markets for skins, horns and the 'fifth quarter'.

RBST

Delivering on priorities

24 *A Red Poll calf at mother-and-calf dairy Pentrefelin*

Watchlist 2024 - a mixed picture but significant opportunities

Welsh Section B.

> ***Despite the continuing uncertainty for livestock breeders, it is becoming increasingly clear that the ongoing changes in UK agriculture provide significant opportunities for those breeding and keeping native livestock.***

The way we manage land and produce food in the UK is changing and the benefits of native breeds within this new farming context are increasingly becoming clear. Added to the high quality produce we associate with native breeds is their ability to be effective land managers. By ensuring that their commercial and environmental attributes are recognised and the opportunities they offer are maximised, we will be able to further improve the status of our rare and native breeds.

The RBST Watchlist is based on figures gathered from breed societies. One of the challenges often cited by breeders is the cost associated with registration but it is crucial for conservation. Every registration helps to give a more accurate picture of breed status, enabling the analysis of population trends and geographic distribution, as well as ensuring the accurate monitoring of genetic diversity and inbreeding levels.

Equines

RBST has been monitoring the Welsh Section B and has seen a steady decline in breeders and animals breeding. With the number of dams which produced registered progeny below 400 in 2023, the decision has been made to move the Section B to the At Risk category.

Of the Priority breeds, the Cleveland Bay horse, Eriskay pony and Suffolk horse all have an effective population size (EPS) below 50, the threshold below which breeds are of concern. The Hackney horse and pony are both also very close to this level.

On a positive note, the New Forest pony is performing very well numerically and is close to moving out of the rare categories on the Watchlist.

The Dartmoor pony was moved to At Risk last year with its performance remaining consistent and the Exmoor pony has continued to improve with the number of dams increasing by 28% from 2022 to 2023.

Pigs

In recent years the pig industry has faced a number of challenges, most significantly rising input costs, particularly for feed. Our native pig breeds have been impacted by this, with seven of eleven native pig breeds categorised as Priority.

While the figures used for the Watchlist are based on pedigree registered animals, the British Pig Association (BPA) survey

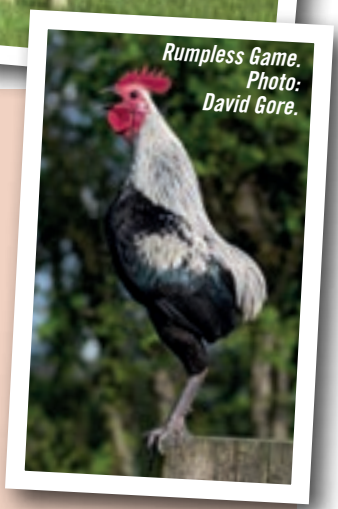
British Landrace – numbers falling.

Delivering on priorities

Bagot – seven years of consistency.

OP Lincoln Red – registrations down. Photo: Ruth Dalton.

Greyface Dartmoor – no longer rare. Photo: Penny Paisley.


Rumpless Game. Photo: David Gore.

results show the actual number of sows is greater than those producing registered progeny, which illustrates the importance of encouraging new and existing pig keepers to select a native breed and register the progeny for the long-term security of these breeds.

Breeds of particular concern are the British Landrace, with the number of breeders registering progeny falling to single figures, and the Welsh fell by 32%. More encouragingly, the number of Saddleback dams was up 16% and number of breeders was up 12%.

Goats

The stability of the goat breed populations is reflected in consistent levels of performance. The Bagots have seen the number of dams exceed 100 for the seventh consecutive year and similarly, the Golden Guernseys have had over 300 dams for the fourth consecutive year. The English goat has also shown an increase in the number of dams, whilst the Old English goat has remained steady.

Both the English and Old English goat remain Priority breeds with the Bagot and Golden Guernsey categorised as At Risk. It is important to increase the numbers of Priority breeds, but the challenge with small populations is ensuring that inbreeding levels are also managed.

Cattle

Amongst the cattle breeds, the Albion has experienced two consecutive years of consistency at the highest levels on record for the breed while the Vaynol has also had two years of consistent results. The Irish Moiled and White Park have also seen an increase of 8% in the number of dams.

The Gloucester is a breed of particular concern. The number of breeders remained largely unchanged, but there was a 20% increase in the number of dams. However, despite this significant improvement, the number of dams is the second lowest figure recorded since 2011.

Both the Shetland and Whitebred Shorthorn have seen a decline in the number of dams by 19% and 20% respectively.

Sheep

The sheep figures present a mixed picture. Following several years of improved performance, the Greyface Dartmoor has moved up the RBST Watchlist and is no longer considered to be a rare breed.

The Border Leicester has also shown significant levels of improvement, with the number of breeders increasing for the eighth consecutive year and the number of dams increasing by 10% improving its EPS.

The Llanwenog had seen several years of significant decline with the number of dams falling by 428, effectively halving in numbers from 2020 to 2022. Encouragingly the numbers have now increased by 13%.

Poultry

The poultry industry faces significant challenges, including Avian Influenza and rising feed costs. The need to house stock and the lack of shows and sales has resulted in a decline in breeding and, in some cases, in poultry breeders dispersing or significantly reducing their flocks.

Unlike other species that RBST works with, poultry are not individually registered with their breed societies so ascertaining a true idea of breed numbers is challenging. DEFRA has attempted to collect data but this data set is currently insufficient to compile the poultry Watchlist on the same basis as other species.

The decision has, therefore, been made to make all of the UK native poultry breeds a Priority. RBST understands the challenges faced by all UK native poultry keepers and will work with the relevant organisations to help ensure poultry conservation status improves.

RBST
Rare Breeds Survival Trust

Watchlist 2024-25

The methodology used by RBST to prioritise breeds compares population size with measures of inbreeding and takes into account both females and males and the internationally recognised effective population calculation.
RBST would like to thank Defra and UK Breed Societies for their help producing the Watchlist.

Sheep

PRIORITY
Lincoln Longwool
North Ronaldsay
Whitefaced Woodland
Welsh Mountain Pedigree

AT RISK
Balwen
Border Leicester
Boreray
Castlemilk Moorit
Cotswold
Derbyshire Gritstone
Devon and Cornwall Longwool
Devon Closewool
Dorset Down
Dorset Horn
Hill Radnor
Leicester Longwool
Llanwenog
Lonk
Manx Loaghtan
Norfolk Horn
Oxford Down
Portland
Soay
Teeswater
Torwen Badgerface Welsh
Wensleydale
Whiteface Dartmoor

OTHER NATIVE BREEDS
Beulah
Black Welsh Mountain*
Blackface (Scottish)
Blueface Leicester
Brecknock Hill Cheviot
Clun Forest
Dalesbred
Exmoor Horn
Greyface Dartmoor*
Hampshire Down
Hebridean*
Herdwick
Jacob*
Kerry Hill*
Llandovery Whiteface Hill
Lleyn*
North Country Cheviot
Poll Dorset
Romney
Rough Fell
Ryeland*
Shetland*
Shropshire*
Southdown*
South Country Cheviot
South Wales Mountain*
Suffolk
Swaledale
Torddu Badgerface Welsh
Welsh Hill Speckled
Welsh Mountain
Wiltshire Horn*

IRISH BREEDS IN THE UK
Galway

Cattle

PRIORITY
Albion
Chillingham Wild Cattle (Feral)
Dairy Shorthorn (Original Population)
Gloucester
Northern Dairy Shorthorn
Vaynol

AT RISK
British White
Irish Moiled
Lincoln Red (Original Population)
Native Aberdeen Angus
Shetland
Traditional Hereford
White Park
Whitebred Shorthorn

OTHER NATIVE BREEDS
Aberdeen Angus
Ayrshire
Beef Shorthorn*
Belted Galloway*
British Friesian
Dairy Shorthorn
Devon
Dexter
Galloway - Including White and Riggit
Guernsey
Hereford
Highland
Jersey
Lincoln Red
Longhorn*
Luing
Red Poll*
South Devon
Sussex
Welsh Black

IRISH BREEDS IN THE UK
Kerry

*These breeds were formerly considered to be Priority or At Risk breeds

Equine

PRIORITY
Cleveland Bay Horse
Dales Pony
Eriskay Pony
Exmoor Pony
Hackney Horse and Pony
Suffolk Horse

AT RISK
Clydesdale Horse
Dartmoor Pony
Fell Pony
Highland Pony
New Forest Pony
Section B Welsh Pony
Shire Horse

OTHER NATIVE BREEDS
Shetland Pony
Welsh Pony and Cob (Types A,C and D)

IRISH BREEDS IN THE UK
Connemara Pony
Irish Draught Horse

FERAL POPULATIONS
Dartmoor Hill Pony
Carneddau Pony

Pigs

PRIORITY
Berkshire
British Landrace
British Lop
Large Black
Large White
Middle White
Tamworth

AT RISK
British Saddleback
Gloucestershire Old Spots
Oxford Sandy and Black
Welsh

Goats

PRIORITY
English Goat
Old English Goat

AT RISK
Bagot
Golden Guernsey

Poultry

PRIORITY

Chickens
Ancona
Andalusian
Australorp
British Araucana
British Faverolles
Brussbar
Buff Orpington
Burmese
Campine
Cochin
Cream Legbar
Croad Langshan
Derbyshire Redcap
Dorking
Hamburgh
Indian Game
Ixworth
Legbar
Leghorn
Malay
Marsh Daisy
Minorca
Modern Game
Modern Langshan
Nankin
Norfolk Grey
North Holland Blue
Old English Game
Old English Pheasant Fowl
Orpington (non Buff)
Rhodebar
Rosecomb
Rumpless Game
Scots Dumpy
Scots Grey
Sebright
Sicilian Buttercup
Spanish
Sultan
Sussex
Welbar

Turkeys
Blue
Bourbon Red
British White
Bronze
Buff
Cröllwitzer (Pied)
Harvey Speckled
Narragansett
Norfolk Black
Slate

Ducks
Abacot Ranger
Aylesbury
Black East Indian
Campbell
Cayuga
Crested
Hookbill
Magpie
Orpington
Pekin
Rouen (Exhibition)
Shetland
Silver Appleyard
Silver Bantam
Stanbridge White
Welsh Harlequin

Geese
Brecon Buff
Buff Back
Embden (as standardised in the UK)
Grey Back
Pilgrim
Roman
Sebastopol
Shetland
Steinbacher
Toulouse (Exhibition)
West of England

Tamworth pig. Photograph: Sam Rose

#NativeBreedsForModernNeeds

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Delivering on priorities

Bezurrell General

Lop project progress

> ***By the end of 2023, eleven boars had been added to the RBST Gene Bank as part of the British Lop Project.***

The breed has a total of seven boar lines and at least one boar from each line has been added.

The most recent additions were Bezurrell General 37 from Giles Eustice's Bezurrell herd and Eaves Duke 3 from Mick Paddock and Sarah Marsden's herd. Both boars were selected out of the 2023 show season stock and make a valuable contribution to the overall mean kinship and thus diversity of all the breeding genetics taken to date.

Eaves Duke is only the second Duke boar to be collected as part of the project and this is a line that was almost lost entirely some years ago before the last of the gene pool was saved from a breeder in Scotland and work was focussed on bringing it back up in both numbers and diversity.

Three other boars collected were from the very successful Liskeard Herd and represented three boar lines: Cornishman, Supreme and Prince. Importantly these three boars represent the Mary and Sunshine sow lines, neither of which have been directly represented in previous boars.

As well as being frozen for the RBST Gene Bank, Eaves Duke 2 and Bezurrell General 37 are remaining on centre at Deerpark Pedigree Pigs. They will be available for use in breeding programmes, enabling breeders to access genetics that may not currently be represented in their herd. The collections that have occurred represent a significant conservation project for the breed, combing both in-situ and ex-situ conservation.

Stonewall Ben

Stepping in to save a unique line

Early in 2023, the Earl of Plymouth Estate in Shropshire announced that it would be dispersing the Felton herd of Gloucestershire Old Spots, a move that could have threatened a unique gene pool.

This herd is quite unusual in that it has operated as a closed herd for many years, with only very occasional introductions of new breeding stock from other breeders. As a result the herd is very unrelated to the rest of the GOS population and represents a unique gene pool which, if lost, would have a negative effect on the overall diversity of the breed. Working in partnership with the Gloucestershire Old Spots Pig Breeders Club and RBST, the BPA identified the sows and boars within the herd that capture the widest possible range of diversity and attempted to find new homes for as many of them as possible.

A total of 12 sows and two boars were moved from the herd representing 10 different sires and 11 different sows. The sows are all in the top 10 per cent of least-related females when compared with the whole GOS population and this unique gene pool has been saved and will be bred back into the national herd.

RBST's study into the carbon content of wool

> ***To challenge the argument that sheep are irredeemably bad for the environment RBST ran a project looking at the carbon content of wool and the extent to which sheep have the potential to be a carbon sink.***

Historically, UK sheep breeds have had a significant economic, environmental and cultural impact – in fact, this country was built on the wealth generated by the wool trade. Over recent times, however, wool has become less popular and increasingly the practice of farming the sheep that produce it has been viewed in a negative light in terms of its contribution to climate change. Although the data are complicated and incomplete, RBST recognises that there is a significant issue with the perception of the effect of greenhouse gases (GHG) from sheep farming, so this study was designed to help fill that data gap.

The overall aim of this project was to investigate the quality of wool samples according to composition of carbon, nitrogen and hydrogen isotopes. The study was focused on elemental analysis of wool samples from the following breeds: Whiteface Dartmoor, Devon and Cornwall Longwool, Greyface Dartmoor, Cotswold, Lincoln Longwool, Wensleydale, Border Leicester, North Ronaldsay, Leicester Longwool, Portland, Balwen, Suffolk, Herdwick, Teeswater, Gritstone, Torwen and Torddu Badger Face, Icelandic, and others.

Overall, the study indicated that if farmed extensively, in systems that reflect the environments they have evolved for, our native breed sheep can play their part in carbon sequestration through their fleeces. Sheep and their wool are part of the natural cycle and one of wool's greatest properties as a sustainable material is that it is biodegradable and so capable of ultimately returning the carbon it stores to the soil.

Delivering on priorities

Large White project moves forward

> ***Pigs selected for the project designed to save the Large White have started moving to their new homes during 2023 to be used to establish new herds.***

The project, which is being carried out in conjunction with the British Pig Association (BPA), aims to increase numbers and improve geographical distribution of the breed, following concerns highlighted by the 2022 Watchlist.

Pigs are being selected on the basis of their genetic importance and being transferred to new locations where they will be part of properly managed and supervised conservation breeding programmes. The programmes will be based on improving significant Large White lines and will set out objectives for the line as a whole and for the specific keeper with supervision through designated members of BPA's Junior Pig Club. As the pigs produce their litters, the offspring will be further dispersed to appropriate keepers to reinvest back into the breed.

Gilts from the Queen and Lassie lines and a boar from the Prince line have been moved to new homes and it is hoped that the Prince boar will produce a boar to go to Deerpark in Ireland for the Gene Bank.

Additional pigs and locations have also been identified to enable pigs to be bred from the Primrose, Dainty Girl, Fanny and Greenback lines.

Increasing the gene pool for a longwool breed

Using the RBST Gene Bank and the Ovine Semen Archive, the Devon and Cornwall Longwool Association has taken steps to increase the breed's gene pool, working with semen dating back as far as the 1990s.

With a gene pool that was getting smaller, breeders were faced with a limited choice of unrelated rams while at the same time some of the breed's semen store was being reduced as part of the rationalisation of the Ovine Semen Archive. This was seen as a great opportunity to make use of the Archive and bring back old blood and through the RBST Gene Bank, the breeders were able to select rams and access genetics not freely available or present in the current breeding population.

The project was undertaken on a trial basis open to Association Council members, five of whom took sheep to a central meeting point where 20 ewes were artificially inseminated using four different rams dating back to 1999. About 80% of the ewes took and the lambs produced were a 50/50 split between ewes and rams. The AI lambs were registered with a different code so that the Association can follow individual rams and their offspring.

Working Shire

Dales ponies

RBST study shows the versatility of native equines

> ***In 2022 RBST gained funding from the Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) for a three-year equine conservation project designed to improve significantly RBST's ability to support both breed societies and individual breeders in the conservation status of our native equine breeds.***

The first year of the project focused on evidence gathering to better understand the challenges and included a versatility study which was completed in 2023.

British native equines are some of the most versatile in the world. Hardy, adaptable and intelligent, they come in all shapes and sizes. Developed and adapted for a variety of uses across the centuries, historically equines have played an important role in society, providing transport, traction and haulage – equines were, literally, 'workhorses'.

As part of RBST's equine conservation project, we wanted to showcase the versatility of native equines and provide a snapshot of their place in society today.

Fewer than 7% of respondents work their horses in their traditional capacity or within a new role. Excluding riding schools or trekking facilities, the breeds which are still working in traditional roles are Shire and Suffolk horses and Dales and Highland ponies. These animals are used for ploughing, farm work, snigging and logging and the removal of large game from inaccessible areas.

However, the unique characteristics and intelligence of our native equines easily has led them to forge new roles and results of the survey evidenced just how versatile our native breeds and their part-breds are, with horses and ponies competing successfully in endurance, eventing, dressage, show jumping, le trec, driving, showing, and agility.

Delivering on priorities

Reinvigorating the Redcap

> ***The Derbyshire Redcap clan breeding programme is part of the Native Poultry Project which aims to increase the genetic diversity and numbers of identified priority breeds.***

The true number of any poultry breed is difficult to establish. However, recognised and recorded numbers of the Derbyshire Redcap are low - the 2022 census of Derbyshire Redcaps recorded fewer than 200 birds - and it is now a breed designated by RBST as a priority for action.

The Native Poultry Project was launched by RBST in the spring of 2021 with the aim of reinvigorating breeds identified as being at risk of genetic decline. The project operates a 'clan' system of breeding which ensures that male birds are rotated amongst breeding groups, in contrast to the 'line breeding' which some poultry breeders operate.

The project started with 12 clans, stretching from Essex in the South to Hull in the North East and in 2022 the project retained forty-two more pullets and three breed standard cockerels. Not every clan returned growth in the first year and, anecdotally, problems arose with the hot summer affecting fertility and some breeders restricting breeding in anticipation of another winter lockdown. Some birds sadly fell prey to predators and those clans had to be started afresh in 2023. However, this was an encouraging start with new genetic patterns and profiles being developed.

Spreading SPARKS

With a growing number of equine breed societies turning to SPARKS to inform their members' breeding programmes, RBST, in conjunction with the system's developer Dr Andy Dell, has produced guidance notes on the core principles which should be followed when providing the mare-based sheets.

SPARKS is an advisory scheme designed to promote the genetic health of a breed, intended to be used by breeders to help in making breeding decisions. The key to the success of SPARKS is ensuring breeders have access to the respective data sheets. It is essential, therefore, that the sheets are made available to any breeder with a legitimate use for them, at no cost, whether or not they are member of the breed society. It is also important that the sheets are accompanied by a current copy of the guidance notes.

SPARKS was first adopted by the Cleveland Bay Horse Society in 2004 and is now being used by the Eriskay Pony, Suffolk Horse, Shire Horse, Dales Pony and Exmoor Pony Breed Societies.

Silent killers

One of the reasons that RBST collects genetic materials for long-term preservation is as an insurance policy against large numbers of our rare breeds being lost due to a major disease outbreak. However, it is not only the headline-hitting epidemics that can threaten numerically challenged breeds, and livestock keepers – and would-be keepers – need to be aware of the 'silent killers' that the public rarely gets to hear about.

The average person tends to know of the impact of livestock disease only from news reports; from the catastrophic consequences of the Foot and Mouth outbreak of 2001 to the more recent debates over TB in cattle and the impact of avian influenza. What most do not realise is that there are ongoing threats of both transmittable and genetically transferred diseases. In large commercial flocks and herds, these may be something that can be mitigated by the scale of operation, but the smaller the breed population, the more impact it can have.

So, as well as working with DEFRA and other bodies to put in place plans for a worst-case scenario, RBST works with breed societies and breeders to identify these more silent killers and raise awareness within breeding circles so that measures can be taken to avoid or eliminate the threats.

One way in which RBST highlights the threats posed by 'silent killers' is with a regular series of articles in The Ark magazine. These highlight specific disease threats and the measures needed to protect against or deal with them. The articles also highlight the part that members of the general public can play in keeping disease from our livestock – measures such as clearing up after dogs when walking in the countryside to help prevent the spread of neosporosis or making sure that any food waste is disposed of safely and securely.

The better-informed livestock owners are, the less the risk of disease entering their herd or flock. With numbers for some breeds at alarmingly low levels, the loss of animals to disease can have a disproportionate impact on the security of the whole breed, so every keeper or potential keeper has another role to play in conservation by being vigilant to disease threats.

Review of bovine Gene Bank

The collection and storage of native breed genetics, in the form of frozen semen and, increasingly, embryos, in the RBST Gene Bank plays an essential role in conserving genetic diversity and as insurance against disease.

It provides a vital archive of the heritage genetics that represent the building blocks of today's breeds which means that as breeds develop to meet commercial needs, we can ensure that the original 'pure' genetics are preserved and can be drawn on in the future. It is also an important resource for breeders looking to ensure that the genetic diversity of their pedigree herds is maintained or improved.

However, with over 100,000 straws in storage, the resources involved in running the Gene Bank are significant and the collection, storage and management of the genetic material requires considerable financial and time commitments. So when, in 2022, RBST was informed of increasing bovine semen storage charges, the decision was made to undertake a full review to ensure that what was in the bank remains consistent with its conservation objectives.

Each breed society was invited to be involved in the process and each breed was reviewed, identifying the bulls in store, looking at any conditions placed on donated semen and identifying breeds and individuals no longer appropriate for Gene Bank storage.

It was agreed that it was appropriate to remove completely the collections from certain bulls, whilst with others the number of doses stored per individual was reduced. The rationalisation of the semen stored represents a significant reduction in monthly storage costs whilst ensuring that we are running a Gene Bank that is fit-for-purpose for our ongoing conservation aims. The exercise has also revealed opportunities by highlighting breeds in greater need of increased representation in the Gene Bank.

Delivering on priorities

Consultancy advice and training

RBST consultancy service

With half a century's experience of studying native livestock and equines, their behaviour and their impact on the natural environment, RBST's expertise in the use and management of native breeds is second to none.

RBST's Consultancy Service makes this expertise available to land managers and owners wanting to keep native livestock and equines on larger holdings, whether as part of a diversified farm business, an ecological restoration project or a move towards "wilder farming".

Advice is provided to landowners and farmers to help them achieve their ecological and commercial goals for a more regenerative farming future. RBST uses its combination of conservation breeding and research programmes, population monitoring, education, advocacy and grass roots practices to inform practical, implementation-focused advice.

> ***The RBST input was comprehensive and very helpful. They looked at various cattle, pig and wild pony breeds that would suit our purposes and help us achieve our wilding vision.***
>
> **Yan Swiderski**,
> The Hamatethy Estate.

The RBST conservation team offers support in scoping a project, selecting breeds and species to achieve ecological and commercial goals, managing their welfare needs, registrations, unlocking potential support payments, infrastructure requirements and sourcing the animals themselves.

All proceeds from the RBST Consultancy Service go towards continuing RBST's work to secure a future for the UK's native breeds.

Large Black pigs at Hamatethy

Conservation grazing course- Sandwell March 2023

RBST courses

RBST was one of the first organisations to recognise the conservation benefits of managed livestock grazing and, as a result, has an unparalleled degree of expertise and experience.

RBST runs three LANTRA-accredited courses: Conservation Grazing in Practice, Advanced Conservation Grazing in Practice and Livestock Checkers. The Conservation Grazing in Practice course, run over two days, provides a basic introduction to extensive/conservation grazing and the use of livestock to achieve environmental objectives. The advanced course, also run over two days, provides experienced graziers with a comprehensive insight into some of the more advanced aspects of conservation grazing, including grazing ecology, physiology and designing complex grazing systems.

The one-day livestock checkers course provides a basic introduction to stock checking in the conservation/land-based sector. It is ideal for beginners, volunteers or anyone with limited experience of livestock. The course covers animal health and welfare, key legislation, the role and responsibilities of a stock checker and how to safely and effectively check livestock.

Both courses are delivered by LANTRA accredited trainers and all delegates receive a LANTRA certificate after successful completion of the course.

> ***Whatever your relationship to conservation grazing is, non-existent to experienced, the RBST grazing course provided an extensive, accessible and comprehensive overview of how to efficiently and ethically utilise livestock used for grazing. The plentiful resources and practical activities and the knowledge to be gained by both were excellently taught, and heightened by the course lecturers' own knowledge. Working within conservation grazing, the course allowed us to share ideas, learn new ideas and ultimately improve our efficacy and welfare.***
>
> **Fleur White**,
> Essex Wildlife Trust.

RBST is delighted to be the chosen provider of conservation grazing training to organisations including the National Trust, RSPB and Wildlife Trusts and has been awarded a three-year contract with Natural England.

RBST

Recognition

 Millie, an Oxford Sandy & Black gilt at Heeley City Farm. Photograph by Rachel Gilbert

Our Patron

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust is delighted that His Majesty The King retains his patronage of RBST following the review of Royal patronages conducted by the Royal Household after His Majesty's accession to the throne.

Then Prince of Wales, The King became Patron of RBST in 1986, at a time when many of our native livestock and equine breeds were at the bleakest point in their history. His invaluable and far-sighted support has helped enable significant expansion of RBST's work, as well as many crucial conservation projects and farm park programmes. His Majesty's own animals have been key to a number of RBST breeding programmes to help secure vulnerable, irreplaceable genetic bloodlines, and he has given a home to new herds that RBST has formed to save some of our very rarest breeds.

Our President

Baroness (Sue) Hayman of Ullock continues in her role as RBST President and chaired the 2023 AGM.

A Labour Life Peer, Baroness Hayman of Ullock has sat under the title in the House of Lords since September 2020 and she is Shadow Spokesperson for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Sue Hayman previously served as Member of Parliament for Workington between 2015 and 2019, becoming Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in 2017.

In her role as President, she is helping RBST to make the case for securing a sustainable future for native livestock and equines in Parliament and across the wider political world.

Recognition

Media coverage highlights 2023

Britain's classic pig breeds in danger as pork industry shrinks

The primary objectives of RBST media activity for 2023 were to maximise the impact of RBST's 50th anniversary activity and associated messages; to use the 50th anniversary milestone to increase the exposure and traction of our commercial and environmental messages; and to maintain our voice on the key issues relevant to the promotion and conservation of native livestock and equine breeds. Promotion of the joint RBST/FCL Take The Common To Town events series also became an objective during the year.

Coverage highlights include:

Launch of the new RBST Watchlist in April 2023

- **The Daily Telegraph** – news story in print and online, plus referenced in editor's comment
- **The Guardian** – news story online
- **The Times** – news story online and in print, quoting Christopher Price and Tom Blunt
- **Sky News interview** (TV) – Susan Tanner interviewed on the Sky News breakfast show
- **BBC Radio 4 Farming Today** – focus on Gloucesters in 'Beef Week', interviews with Clifford and Christopher
- **BBC Radio Cymru** – Andrea interviewed in Welsh on breakfast show
- **BBC Look North** (TV)
  - News and photos on breakfast show
  - Helen Wray at Gam Farm on lunchtime and evening news
- **Farmers Weekly** – news story online & in print
- **Farmers Guardian** – full page article in print
- **Country Life** – news story in print
- **Horse & Hound** – news story in print
- **Showing World / Native Pony** – news story online
- **Pig World** – news story online
- **Farming UK** – news story online
- **South West Farmer** – news story online
- **Farm Life (NI)** – news story online
- **The Scottish Farmer** – news online & in print
- **Devon Live** – news story online
- **Cornwall Live** – news story online
- **Western Morning News** – news story in print
- **Eastern Daily Press** – news story
- **Yorkshire Post (Country Week)** – native pigs news story in print (farming pages) and native equines news story in print (equestrian pages)
- **The Courier** – news story in print
- **The Press & Journal** – news story in print
- **Anglia Farmer** – news story in print
- **Tractor & Farming heritage magazine**
- **The Country Smallholding magazine** – double page spread

Total Watchlist reach estimate (through launch media alone) – 9,995,701 readers

Eat native breed pigs to save their bacon, says trust as numbers fall

Buy native pork to save pigs' bacon

50th anniversary commentary and events

- **BBC Radio 4 Farming Today** – Rheged event report and interviews
- **Farmers Guardian** – 50th anniversary opinion article from Christopher Price (January)
- **Farmers Guardian** – 50th anniversary Backbone section article (October)
- **The Country Smallholding** – 50th anniversary opinion article
- **Farm Week (NI)** – 50th anniversary commentary article
- **Western Morning News** – Heligan event report
- **East Anglian Daily Times** – Jimmy's Farm event report
- **BBC Radio Ulster** – Tannaghmore report and interviews
- **Country Life** – House of Lords reception, and Heligan event report
- **Country Life** - Native breed profiles in each weekly issue of Country Life magazine
- **The People's Friend magazine** – in-depth article on 50th anniversary and interview with Tom Blunt
- **Scottish titles including The Scottish Farmer, The Courier, The Press & Journal** – RBST Scotland's Farm to Fork conference
- **Countryfile** - special compilation programme fronted by Adam Henson

Rare Breeds Week on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today (December 2023)

- **Overview and modern uses** (interview with Christopher)
- **Welsh Pigs** (with interview from Andrea)
- **Abattoirs announcement**, including RBST response
- **Interviews with RBST members** (North Ronaldsays, Canon Hall Farm, Suffolk Horse)

LIVESTOCK SMALLHOLDER
RBST celebrates 50 years
They're truly our national treasures
Five decades of rare progress
Farming Today
FARMING TODAY
19/05/23 Mental health in rural communities; 50 years of Rare Breeds Survival Trust; Renewable heat for glasshouse
RBST

Recognition

Media coverage highlights 2023

Maintaining our messages on modern uses and commercial potential with native breeds

- **The i Paper** – 'Tastier Meat and Greener Farming On the Way', article on native breeds based on interviews with Christopher Price and Geordie Soutar
- **The Economist** – 'Saving Your Bacon' overview of native breeds and their benefits
- **Farmers Guardian** – diversification article (farm shops, cafes & restaurants with native breeds)
- **RBST Commercial Trends Survey** – Western Morning News, Western Daily Press, Farmers Guardian
- **Abattoirs** – campaign, fund announcement, fund launch coverage including articles in the Yorkshire Post, Western Morning News, Farmers Weekly, Farmers Guardian, BBC R4 Farming Today and Country Life
- **NFU Countryside** – best breeds for smallholders
- **Horse & Hound** - modern uses for native equines in equine seminar report
- **Key commercial messages** featured in all coverage related to 50th anniversary
- **Coverage of the Small Producers Pilot Fund announcement** and the RBST Scotland conference (Farming press including Farmers Guardian)

Native breeds insulate against input cost hikes
Calls to help promote rare equine breeds
Britain's endangered horses and ponies should be "shouted about"
UK's rare pony breed seen at Smithills Hall in Bolton
Go native to help keep West's iconic farm breeds thriving
Will Your Christmas Feast Help Northern Ireland's Rare Breeds?
RBST

Rare upland sheep breed at fair
Coronation fund set up to save the rarest of British breeds
Christmas is coming, the goose is getting fat
Rare Whitefaced Woodlands still play key role
RARE BREED SURVIVAL TRUST
A busy 50th anniversary year for promoting native livestock breeds

Supporting rare breed farmers by promoting produce

- **Waitrose's native breed beef pledge** (including in depth retailer feature in Western Morning News)
- **Readers Digest** – 'Slow Food' recipes
- **Local produce at Christmas** – including articles in:
  - Western Morning News
  - Western Daily Press
  - Yorkshire Post
  - The Craven Herald
  - Eastern Daily Press
  - East Anglian Daily Times
  - Great Yarmouth Mercury
  - North West Evening Mail
  - The Courier
  - The Press & Journal
  - Farm Life (NI)
  - Brecon & Radnor Express

Poultry focus

- **The Country Smallholder** – Chickens
- **The Country Smallholder** – Ducks
- **The Country Smallholder** – Geese
- **NFU Countryside magazine** – poultry breeds feature

Take The Common To Town event series

- **April** - Telford: Radio interview on BBC Radio Shropshire (Andrea Parry-Jones)
- **June** - Barrow-in-Furness: The Westmorland Gazette
- **June** - Barrow-in-Furness: The NWE Mail
- **August** - Torre Abbey: Western Morning News article in print
- **August** - Torre Abbey: Interview on BBC Radio Devon (Roy Endacott)
- **August** - Temple Newsam: The Yorkshire Post in print and online
- **August** - Temple Newsam: Leeds Star
- **October** - Smithills Hall: The Bolton News (promoting the event beforehand)
- **October** - Smithills Hall: The Bolton News (reporting on the event the day afterwards)
- **November** - Barrow Natural Christmas Market: NWE Mail
- **December 2023** - Barrow Natural Christmas Market: NWE Mail

Coverage of other areas of focus

- **Country Life** - Coronation Issue essay
- **Coronation Fund campaign commentary** (Mail on Sunday, Daily Telegraph, Farmers Guardian)
- **Dartmoor management review response** (Farmers Weekly, Western Morning News)
- **Cleveland Bay profile** in NFU Countryside magazine
- **Reviews of the year** – Western Morning News, Western Daily Press and The Country Smallholder
- **Trustee appointments** – Worcestershire and Scotland press
- **Country Living magazine** - breed profiles
- **Groundswell seminar** – Farmers Guardian
- **Response to Limousin Cattle Society carbon claims** – Farmers Guardian
- **BBC Radio Ulster interview** – grazing with sheep / cattle to regenerate the Mournes
- **Response to JRM Australian beef comments** in Farmers Weekly

Key Points for Consideration Into 2024

- ***We will seek opportunities to increase proactive equine coverage.***
- ***A reduced need for events promotion activity in 2024 will enable greater focus on our other objectives.***
- ***We are making the Watchlist launch more of an 'event' each year – crucial that we keep up momentum in 2024.***
- ***Diversification – we will seek new angles, data and case studies to continue communicating this message.***
- ***We need to prepare for, and get ahead of, debate on native breeds and carbon impact, particularly cattle.***
- ***Wales remains a more challenging region for securing coverage. In 2024 we will seek new case studies and offer interviews with Andrea Parry-Jones / identify local spokespeople.***

Golden Guernsey kids

#NativeBreedsForModernNeeds

Financial Review

Operating statement

	2023				2022
	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	**Total**	Total
	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income and endowments from:					
Grants and Donations	48,874	34,000	68,601	**151,475**	119,090
Legacies	124,199	-	-	**124,199**	72,067
Membership Subscriptions (inc Gift Aid)	196,811	-	-	**196,811**	198,387
Charitable Activities	120,708	-	-	**120,708**	55,661
Advertising Revenue	22,279	-	194	**22,473**	15,687
Investments	114,168	-	-	**114,168**	114,761
Total income and endowments	**627,039**	**34,000**	**68,795**	**729,834**	575,653
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	185,247	-	-	**185,247**	171,489
Investment management fees	17,185	-	-	**17,185**	18,176
Charitable activities	374,411	81,889	40,527	**496,827**	474,536
Total expenditure	**576,843**	**81,889**	**40,527**	**699,259**	664,201
Net gains/(losses) on investments	33,103	-	-	**33,103**	(294,184)
Net income/(expenditure)	**83,299**	**(47,889)**	**28,268**	**63,678**	(382,732)

Income

Total income from 2023 was £729,834 compared with £575,653 in 2022. The increase was predominantly driven by an increase in grants and donations, legacies and conservation grazing training.

Legacies are inherently difficult to forecast and have a tendency to be volatile. Thus, RBST budgets for Legacies using long term averages.

Grants and donations were up predominantly due to donations received for the 50th Anniversary, which were well in excess of expectations.

Income from charitable activities in 2023 was £120,708 compared with £55,661 in 2022. The increase was predominantly due to the growing popularity of RBST's conservation grazing courses, particularly amongst the landowning conservation organisations including Natural England.

In line with accounting requirements, investments are revalued at each year end. In 2023 investments returned to a net positive movement in funds of £33,103, a swing of £327,287 from the loss of £294,184 experienced in 2022. As has been flagged in previous years, this figure is simply a snap shot of our investments at a point in time and is highly dependent on the markets at that moment.

Expenditure

Expenditure for 2023 totalled £699,259 compared with £664,201 in 2022. The increase was planned and was driven by an increase in both charitable and fundraising activities. Costs continue to be kept under close control.

Unrestricted spend on Charitable activities increase as the Trust continued to ensure spend was being directed to forwarding the Trust's objectives.

Balance sheet

The Balance Sheet remains robust, with net assets increased by 2% to £3,373,229 at the end of 2023.

Financial Review (continued)

Reserves policy

	31 December 2023	31 December 2022	% Increase/ (Decrease)
Unrestricted funds (Free Reserves)	994,930	903,529	10.1%
Unrestricted funds (Tangible Fixed Assets)	100,150	98,735	1.4%
Total Unrestricted funds	1,095,080	1,002,264	9.3%
Designated Funds:			
- Gene Bank	2,000,000	2,000,000	0.0%
- 50th Anniversary	-	39,396	-
- Conservation – Breed stock	21,709	22,009	-1.4%
- Property improvement fund	132,000	132,000	0.0%
- Lop Fund	8,951	8,951	0.0%
Restricted Funds:			
- Cattle Conservation	5,094	5,487	-7.2%
- Equine Conservation	29,145	23,987	21.5%
- Goat Conservation	2,659	2,659	0.0%
- Pig Conservation	38,162	40,882	-6.7%
- Sheep Conservation	21,562	21,779	-1.0%
- Other projects	10,577	10,437	1.3%
Ratio of Free Reserves to Annual Operating Expenditure	1.4 years	1.4 years	

The charity maintains a large investment portfolio in order to create an income, currently in the region of £114,000, to help fund its charitable activities.

Free reserves are shown in accordance with Charity Commission guidance CC19.

One of the prime objectives of the charity is to ensure the preservation of breeds. Therefore, a Gene Bank is maintained to ensure the characteristics of old and current breeds are conserved. This Gene Bank is treated as a heritage asset, which is irreplaceable. The Trustees have therefore designated £2million to maintain and develop the Gene Bank for the next generation.

The reserves that the Trustees have set aside provide financial stability and the means for the development of our principal activity. The Trustees' aim is for free reserves to always cover at least the annual operating expenditure.

The Trustees regularly review the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil our continuing obligations.

Investment policy

A medium-risk approach describes the investment policy. Assets are held in the RBST Portfolio which is managed by Evelyn and which invests in a combination of segregated equities and collective funds. The portfolio achieved an income yield of +4.42%, against an average benchmark of +10.11%, which was a below par performance given the market conditions. This will be addressed in 2024. The investment aim is to achieve this income target without detriment to the growth and without incurring unnecessary risk. The value of the RBST portfolio as at 31 December 2023 was £3,122,137 compared with £3,149,353 as at 31 December 2022.

Governance

Structure

RBST is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Registration No. 269442). It is also a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Registration No. 01204694). It was founded in 1973. Its objects and powers are set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

Trustees

The Board of RBST is comprised of unpaid trustees, with no fewer than six elected from its membership and up to five co-opted. The trustees are also the directors of RBST for the purposes of company law. The Board is responsible for setting policy, agreeing strategy and approving major commitments based on advice from senior management, and the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer. Day-to-day operations are delegated by the Board to the Chief Executive Officer, who leads the executive and volunteer teams. RBST's Memorandum and Articles of Association provide that elected trustees may be appointed for two periods of up to four years, with years being defined by AGMs, at a time and must then take a minimum break of 24 months. Co-opted trustees may be appointed for two periods of up to three years, with years being defined by AGMs, at a time and must then take a minimum break of 24 months. The Board has two principal committees: the Conservation and Research Committee and the Finance and Governance Committee. Membership of these committees along with a full list of trustees and staff at the time of writing of this report are provided at the end of this report. The Conservation and Research Committee advises the Board of Trustees on strategic issues concerning conservation programmes and related activities. The Finance and Governance Committee is responsible for reviewing RBST's financial performance and matters relating to management, organisation, governance, investments and risk management. Each new trustee is provided with training and an induction, where s/he learns about the organisation and the role and responsibilities of a trustee. The induction includes a pack containing the Charity Commission guidance 'The Essential Trustee'; RBST's governing documents; and the most recent annual report and financial statements. Trustees receive ongoing training, receive charity law updates, and are involved in strategic sessions relating to the operations during the year.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of RBST for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom generally accepted accounting practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards). Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions, disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, and the provisions of the Charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all reasonable steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information. The trustees are also responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website.

Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Governance (continued)

Grant making policy

RBST occasionally makes donations or grants, in line with its charitable and strategic objectives, to partners in the RBST network, the outcomes of which are reviewed at regular periods.

Public benefit

In reviewing RBST's charitable objectives and as part of planning its future programme of work, the trustees of RBST have taken account of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and have considered how the planned programme of work will consistently contribute to the Charity's aims and objectives.

Remuneration policy

RBST's approach to remuneration across the organisation is designed to ensure it can attract and retain the talented and motivated people it needs to deliver its mission.

Fundraising Regulator Statement of Compliance

The charity does not contract with a third party to undertake any fundraising on its behalf. The charity does employ a fundraising officer who initiates campaigns and supports fundraising activities.

The charity only makes fundraising approaches to contacts who have given explicit consent to receive such campaign documentation under GDPR guidelines. We have received no fundraising complaints during the year.

Risk management

The trustees have reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate those risks. Particular attention has focused on Support Groups. These and other risks are kept under review. A full review of the risk register will be carried out next year.

Trustees Indemnity

The charity has Trustees' indemnity insurance in place.

Our employees & volunteers

The delivery of RBST's mission relies on talented and motivated people, and RBST is proud of the performance of its staff and volunteers across the UK. The trustees and Chief Executive Officer encourage widespread consultation and exchange of information at all levels of the organisation and continue to work together on a range of actions to improve employee and volunteer engagement, ensuring that RBST remains a great place to work and volunteer.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The trustees are committed to addressing equality, diversity and inclusion, recognising that doing so helps a board to make better decisions and means RBST is more likely to stay relevant to those it serves and to deliver its public benefit. Trustees will work to recognise and counter any imbalances in power, perspectives or opportunities in RBST, and in the attitudes and behaviour of trustees, staff and volunteers, so helping to make sure RBST achieves its aims.

The trustees' report (including the directors' report) was approved by the Board of trustees on 13 June 2024 and was signed on their behalf by:

John Atkinson

Chairman of the Board of trustees

Date: 13 June 2024

Independent Auditors Report

Year Ended 31 December 2023

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cashflows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2023, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report (incorporating the directors' report) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies' regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the directors' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 45, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the

Independent Auditors Report (continued)

going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

- Enquiry of management, those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Enquiry of entity staff in compliance functions to identify any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Performing audit work over the risk of management override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charitable company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Geoffrey Cox BA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Dafferns LLP, Statutory Auditor
One Eastwood
Binley Business Park
Coventry, CV3 2UB
Date: 13 June 2024

Statement of Financial Activities

(Including Income and Expenditure Account)
Year Ended 31 December 2023

		2023				2022
		Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	**Total**	Total
	Note	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	2	369,884	34,000	68,601	**472,485**	389,544
Charitable activities	3	120,708	-	-	**120,708**	55,661
Other trading activities	4	22,279	-	194	**22,473**	15,687
Investments	5	14,168	-	-	**114,168**	114,761
Total income and endowments		**627,039**	**34,000**	**68,795**	**729,834**	575,653
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		185,247	-	-	**185,247**	171,489
Investment management fees		17,185	-	-	**17,185**	18,176
Charitable activities	6	374,411	81,889	40,527	**496,827**	474,536
Total expenditure		**576,843**	**81,889**	**40,527**	**699,259**	664,201
Net gains/(losses) on investments	15	33,103	-	-	**33,103**	(294,184)
Net income/(expenditure)		**83,299**	**(47,889)**	**28,268**	**63,678**	(382,732)
Transfers between funds	20	9,517	8,493	(18,010)	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains/(losses) on revaluation of fixed assets	13	-	(300)	-	**(300)**	(2,770)
Net movement in funds		**92,816**	**(39,696)**	**10,258**	**63,378**	(385,502)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	20	1,002,264	2,202,356	105,231	**3,309,851**	3,695,353
Total funds carried forward	20	**1,095,080**	**2,162,660**	**115,489**	**3,373,229**	3,309,851

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities. Activities relating to the Gene bank are disclosed in note 14.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

Balance sheet

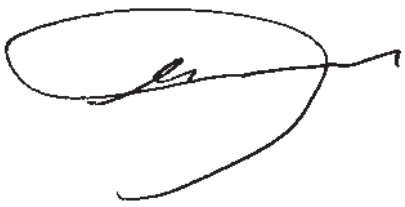
Year Ended 31 December 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	13	**100,150**	98,735
Heritage assets	14	**-**	-
Investments	15	**3,122,137**	3,149,353
		3,222,287	3,248,088
Current assets			
Stocks	16	**28,848**	15,324
Debtors	17	**116,925**	61,172
Cash at bank and in hand		**68,914**	48,747
		214,687	125,243
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**63,745**	63,480
Net current assets		**150,942**	61,763
Net assets		**3,373,229**	3,309,851
Charity Funds			
Unrestricted funds	20	**1,095,080**	1,002,264
Designated funds	20	**2,162,660**	2,202,356
Restricted funds	20	**115,489**	105,231
Total charity funds		**3,373,229**	3,309,851

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board on 13 June 2024.

Signed on behalf of the Board of trustees

John Atkinson, Chairman of Trustees,



Martin Penny, Treasurer

The notes on pages 52 to 63 form part of these financial statements

Company registration number: 01204694

Statement of cash flows

Year Ended 31 December 2023

	2023	2022
	£	£
Cash flow from operating activities	**(143,841)**	(212,738)
Cash flow from investing activities		
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	**(10,479)**	(3,141)
Payments to acquire investments	**(691,667)**	(74,632)
Receipts from sales of investments	**751,986**	171,167
Interest received	**18,612**	10,889
Dividends received	**95,556**	103,872
Net cash flow from investing activities	**164,008**	208,155
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	**20,167**	(4,583)
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January 2023	**48,747**	53,330
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2023	**68,914**	48,747
Cash and cash equivalents consists of:		
Cash at bank and in hand	**68,914**	48,747
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December 2023	**68,914**	48,747

	2023	2022
	£	£
Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities		
Net income / (expenditure) for year	**63,378**	(385,502)
Dividends received	**(95,556)**	(103,872)
Interest receivable	**(18,612)**	(10,889)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	**9,064**	9,133
(Gains) / losses on investments	**(33,103)**	294,184
(Increase) in stock	**(13,524)**	(7,964)
(Increase) in debtors	**(55,753)**	(25,682)
Increase in creditors	**265**	17,855
Net cash flow from operating activities	**(143,841)**	(212,738)

Analysis of changes in net debt

	31/12/22	Cashflows	**31/12/23**
	£	£	**£**
Cash and cash equivalents	48,747	20,167	**68,914**

Notes to the financial statements

Year Ended 31 December 2023

1 Summary of significant accounting policies

(a) General information and basis of preparation

Rare Breeds Survival Trust is an incorporated charity registered in England. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charity. The address of the registered office is Avenue Q, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are:

- For the benefit of the public to ensure the preservation of breeds and breeding groups of domestic farm livestock of importance in the promotion of agriculture being breeds at risk, and having characteristics worthy of preservation in the interests of zoological research and education to ensure the preservation of genes of special or potential value in hybridisation or other work; and
- To conduct, carry out and promote research within all areas of the Trust's interest to increase knowledge and to publish the results of such research.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention, modified to include certain items at fair value. The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless otherwise stated.

A network of volunteer support groups is constituted within the Trust and accordingly the accounts include their financial activities.

(b) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. The cost of raising and administering such funds is charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

(c) Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received.

Subscriptions are included in the Income and Expenditure Account in the accounting period in which they are received.

This treatment is also adopted for the limited number of subscriptions received from new life members.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled.

Donated facilities and donated professional services are recognised in income at their fair value when their economic benefit is probable, it can be measured reliably and the charity has control over the item. Fair value is determined on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity, for example the amount the charity would be willing to pay in the open market for such facilities and services. A corresponding amount is recognised in expenditure.

No amount is included in the financial statements for volunteer time in line with the SORP (FRS 102). Further detail is given in the Trustees' Annual Report.

For legacies, entitlement is the earlier of the charity being notified of an impending distribution or the legacy being received. At this point income is recognised. On occasion legacies will be notified to the charity for which it is not possible to measure the amount expected to be distributed. On these occasions, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed.

Income from trading activities includes income earned from fundraising events and trading activities to raise funds for the charity. Income is received in exchange for supplying goods and services in order to raise funds and is recognised when entitlement has occurred.

Investment income is earned through holding assets for investment purposes such as shares and property. It includes dividends, interest and rent. Where it is not practicable to identify investment management costs incurred within a scheme with reasonable accuracy the investment income is reported net of these costs. It is included when the amount can be measured reliably. Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method and dividend and rent income is recognised as the charity's right to receive payment is established.

(d) Expenditure recognition

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds includes fundraising and non-charitable trading activities;
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes costs of services and of grants, also support costs and depreciation on related assets; and
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into the categories above.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as an expense against the activity for which expenditure arose.

(e) Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, and administrative payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. All support costs have been allocated on the basis of number of employees. Fund-raising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.

The analysis of these costs is included in note 7.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 December 2023

(f) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost (or deemed cost) or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Cost includes costs directly attributable to making the asset capable of operating as intended. Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets, at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset on a systematic basis over its expected useful life as follows:

Leasehold land and buildings	Over the period of the lease
Office and Computer Equipment	10%-33% according to the nature of the asset
Conservation Breeding Stock (agisted)	Annual Revaluation

(g) Heritage assets

The Gene Bank is a collection of semen and embryos obtained from rare breeds of cattle, horses, sheep, goats and pigs. It acts as an archive to preserve bloodlines of breeds. Each year additions are made to the archive to ensure that it includes the current characteristics of a breed. The archive is regarded as an irreplaceable resource which cannot be valued with any degree of accuracy and will never be sold. As such it generates no income and so has no realisable value. Therefore it does not have a carrying value in the balance sheet. The costs incurred in maintaining the archive for conservation purposes are written off each year.

(h) Investments

Investments are recognised initially at fair value which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs. Subsequently, they are measured at fair value with changes recognised in 'net gains / (losses) on investments' in the SoFA if the shares are publicly traded or their fair value can otherwise be measured reliably. Other investments are measured at cost less impairment.

(i) Stocks

Stocks comprise genetic resources, which are not part of the Gene Bank, and goods for resale. Genetic resources are valued at the lower of cost of production and market value. Retail stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

(j) Debtors and creditors receivable / payable within one year

Debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price. Any losses arising from impairment are recognised in expenditure.

(k) Impairment

Assets not measured at fair value are reviewed for any indication that the asset may be impaired at each balance sheet date. If such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, or the asset's cash generating unit, is estimated and compared to the carrying amount. Where the carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, an impairment loss is recognised in profit or loss unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount where the impairment loss is a revaluation decrease.

(l) Leases

Assets acquired under finance leases are capitalised and depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and the expected useful life of the asset. Minimum lease payments are apportioned between the finance charge and the reduction of the outstanding lease liability using the effective interest method. The related obligations, net of future finance charges, are included in creditors.

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

(m) Employee benefits

When employees have rendered service to the charity, short-term employee benefits to which the employees are entitled are recognised at the undiscounted amount expected to be paid in exchange for that service. The charity operates a defined contribution pension plan for the benefit of its employees. Contributions are expensed as they become payable. The Trust agrees to pay a defined contribution into the employee's own personal pension scheme for eligible employees. The pension charge represents contributions payable by the Trust for the period. The Trust's liability is limited to the amount of the contribution. The liability for meeting future pension payments rests solely with the employee's personal pension scheme.

(n) Tax

The charity is an exempt charity within the meaning of schedule 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

(o) Financial instruments

The Trust enters into only basic financial instrument transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other amounts receivable and payable and loans to related parties. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

(p) Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis as the trustees believe that no material uncertainties exist. The trustees have considered the level of funds held and the expected level of income and expenditure for 12 months from authorising these financial statements. The budgeted income and expenditure is sufficient with the level of reserves for the charity to be able to continue as a going concern.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	2023	2022
	£	£
Grants and donations	**151,475**	119,090
Legacies	**124,199**	72,067
Membership Subscriptions (including gift aid)	**196,811**	198,387
	472,485	389,544

Of the income from donations and legacies of £275,674 (2022 - £191,157), £68,601 (2022 - £56,246) was attributable to restricted, £34,000 (2022 - £nil) was attributable to designated funds and £173,073 (2022 - £134,911) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

Income from membership subscriptions was attributable entirely to unrestricted funds.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 December 2023

3 Income from charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Conservation activities (including Support Groups)	**120,708**	55,661

Income from charitable activities was attributable to unrestricted funds in both years.

4 Income from other trading activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Advertising revenue	**22,473**	15,687

Of the income from other trading activities, £194 (2022 - £nil) was attributable to restricted, and £22,279 (2022 - £15,687) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

5 Income from investments

	2023	2022
	£	£
Dividends - equities	**95,556**	103,872
Interest - Fixed interest securities	**18,612**	10,889
	114,168	114,761

Income from investments was attributable to unrestricted funds in both years.

6 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	2023			
	Activities undertaken directly	Grant funding of activities	Support costs	**Total**
	£	£	£	**£**
Conservation Activities (including Support Group)	311,083	-	130,339	**441,422**
ARK Magazine	55,405	-	-	**55,405**
	366,488	**-**	**130,339**	**496,827**

£40,527 (2022 - £34,567) of the above costs were attributable to restricted funds. £81,889 (2022 - £72,941) of the above costs were attributable to designated funds. £374,411 (2022 - £367,028) of the above costs were attributable to unrestricted funds.

7 Allocation of support costs

	2023			
	Raising funds	Conservation Activities	ARK Magazine	**Total**
	£	£	£	**£**
Governance	-	11,034	-	**11,034**
Management salaries and expenses	30,736	61,473	-	**92,209**
Office operational costs and utilities	15,486	30,973	-	**46,459**
Depreciation	2,921	5,843	-	**8,764**
Professional charges	4,347	8,695	-	**13,042**
Irrecoverable VAT	2,892	5,784	-	**8,676**
Other	3,267	6,537	-	**9,804**
Total	**59,649**	**130,339**	**-**	**189,988**

Supports costs, except governance costs, have been allocated based on staff time.

8 Governance costs

		2023	2022
	Note	**£**	£
Trustees' remuneration	11	**-**	-
Trustees' expenses	11	**376**	1,359
Cost of Trustees' meetings and the AGM		**537**	1,715
Auditors' remuneration	10	**6,100**	6,100
Legal fees		**4,021**	21,185
		11,034	30,359

9 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Net income / (expenditure) is stated after charging / (crediting):		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**8,764**	6,363
Operating lease rentals	**2,353**	2,353
Loss/(gain) on fair value movement of investments	**(33,103)**	294,184

10 Auditors' remuneration

The auditors' remuneration amounts to an audit fee of £6,100 (2022 - £6,100) and other services of £13,042 (2022 - £10,643).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 December 2023

11 Trustees' and key management personnel remuneration and expenses

The Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2022 - £nil).

The total amount of employee benefits (these benefits include employer's national insurance and pension costs) received by key management personnel is £176,911 (2022: £171,635). The Trust considers its key management personnel to comprise the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Finance and Operations.

One trustee (2022: Two) was reimbursed expenses as follows:	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Travel	**122**	608
Subsistence	**-**	83
Accommodation	**254**	568
Other	**-**	100
	376	1,359

12 Staff costs and employee benefits

The average monthly number of employees and full time equivalent (FTE) during the year was as follows:

	2023	**2023**	2022	2022
	Number	FTE	Number	FTE
Raising funds	**2**	**2**	2	2
Charitable activities	**4**	**4**	4	3
Governance	**2**	**2**	2	2
	8	**8**	8	7

The total staff costs and employees' benefits was as follows:	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**313,998**	293,625
Social security	**33,893**	31,923
Defined contribution pension costs	**15,700**	13,986
	363,591	339,534

The number of employees receiving total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) of over £60,000 per year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£60,001 - £70,000	**-**	-
£70,001 - £80,000	**1**	1
£80,001 - £90,000	**-**	-
£90,001 - £100,000	**1**	1

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Short Leasehold	Office & Equipment	Conservation Breeding Stock (Agisted)	**Total**
	£	£	£	**£**
Cost or valuation:				
At 31 December 2022	221,443	157,633	22,010	**401,086**
Additions	-	10,479	-	**10,479**
Revaluation	-	-	(300)	**(300)**
At 31 December 2023	221,443	168,112	21,710	**411,265**
Depreciation:				
At 31 December 2022	150,705	151,646	-	**302,351**
Charge for the year	4,440	4,324	-	**8,764**
At 31 December 2023	155,145	155,970	-	**311,115**
Net book value:				
At 31 December 2023	66,298	12,142	21,710	**100,150**
At 31 December 2022	70,738	5,987	22,010	**98,735**

14 Heritage assets

Heritage assets held are The National Archive Gene Bank and no value has been placed on this asset.

These assets are significant to the charity in order to safeguard the future of rare breeds. Expenditure to acquire preserve and develop The National Archive Gene Bank in the year was £71,318 (2022 - £73,708).

15 Fixed asset investments

	Listed Investments
	£
Cost or valuation	
At 31 December 2022	**3,149,353**
Additions	**691,667**
Disposals	**(751,986)**
Revaluation	**33,103**
At 31 December 2023	**3,122,137**

Investments at fair value comprise:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Equities & unit trusts	**3,064,843**	3,047,670
Cash within investment portfolio	**57,294**	101,683
	3,122,137	3,149,353

The fair value of listed investments is determined by reference to the mid-market value of the unit trusts or quoted share price.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 December 2023

16 Stocks

	2023	2022
	£	£
Semen for sale	**9,000**	6,390
Merchandise stock	**19,848**	8,934
	28,848	15,324

17 Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	**15,137**	11,430
Amounts owed by support groups	**14,453**	18,032
Prepayments and accrued income	**82,531**	26,436
Taxes recoverable	**4,804**	5,274
	116,925	61,172

18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	**13,870**	18,201
Other tax and social security	**9,325**	8,866
Other creditors	**2,838**	2,594
Accruals	**37,712**	33,819
	63,745	63,480

19 Leases

Operating leases – lessee

Total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Not later than one year	**2,353**	2,353
Later than one and not later than five years	**8,364**	8,732
Later than five years	**20,130**	22,143
	30,847	33,228

20 Fund reconciliation

	Balance at 31 December 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains / (losses)	Balance at 31 December 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds						
Unrestricted	**1,002,264**	627,039	(576,843)	9,517	33,103	**1,095,080**
Designated Funds						
Gene Bank	**2,000,000**	-	(48,506)	48,506	-	**2,000,000**
50th Anniversary	**39,396**	34,000	(33,383)	(40,013)	-	**-**
Conservation – Breed Stock (Agisted)	**22,009**	-	-	-	(300)	**21,709**
Property improvement fund	**132,000**	-	-	-	-	**132,000**
Lop Fund	**8,951**	-	-	-	-	**8,951**
	2,202,356	34,000	(81,889)	8,493	(300)	**2,162,660**

Unrestricted funds description

Unrestricted funds are those funds available for use, at the discretion of the Trustees, in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds description

The archive Gene Bank is held to maintain the Heritage Assets for the benefit of the next generation.

The 50th Anniversary fund was set up to cover costs of various events to commemorate the 50th anniversary in 2023.

The Conservation Breeding Stock (Agisted), reserve is the value of RBST rare breed stock on loan to livestock keepers to increase rare breed population numbers.

The Property improvement fund relates to the proposed refurbishment of the premises at Stoneleigh Park.

The Lop Fund was created to help support the work in regard to British Lop pigs, along with the donation received from the Gerald Fallowes Discretionary Trust.

Restricted funds and Trusts

We are extremely grateful to the charitable trusts and foundations that support our work. Some trusts provide general funding, while others prefer to sponsor specific projects as detailed on page 62.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 December 2023

Restricted funds Fund Descriptions	Balance at 31 December 2022 £	Income £	Expend -iture £	Transfers £	Gains / (losses) £	Balance at 31 December 2023 £
Restricted cattle conservation						
N Bailey Albion Fund	**1,487**	528	-	-	-	**2,015**
Vaynol project	**1,000**	-	-	-	-	**1,000**
Gloucester project	**3,000**	-	(921)	-	-	**2,079**
2019 Cattle Campaign	**-**	40	-	-	-	**40**
Restricted equine conservation						
Houserace Betting Levy Board	**1,274**	-	-	-	-	**1,274**
HBLB 3 year conservation programme	-	15,875	-	(15,875)	-	**-**
Cleveland bay - N Bailey	**1,500**	5,528	(756)	(250)	-	**6,022**
Heavy Horse Appeal 2017	**18,578**	636	-	-	-	**19,214**
Marjorie Coote Animal Charity Trust	**2,634**	-	-	-	-	**2,634**
The Saintbury Trust	**1**	-	-	-	-	**1**
Equine general	**-**	3,000	-	-	-	**3,000**
Restricted goat conservation						
Goat Appeal	**1,196**	-	-	-	-	**1,196**
John Spedan Lewis Foundation	**1,463**	-	-	-	-	**1,463**
Restricted pig conservation						
Conservation General	**6,965**	-	(6,965)	-	-	**-**
PG Fallowes Lop Project	**23,500**	-	(13,090)	-	-	**10,410**
PBA Priority Breeds Appeal	**7,777**	18,819	-	(99)	-	**26,497**
PF Charitable Trust	**2,640**	-	(1,385)	-	-	**1,255**
William Dean Trust	**-**	250	-	-	-	**250**
Restricted sheep conservation						
Love a Longwool Appeal	**19,903**	1,736	(167)	(1,786)	-	**19,686**
Rosie Green Wool Sheep Fund	**1,876**	-	-	-	-	**1,876**
Restricted poultry conservation						
Poultry general	**20**	100	(120)	-	-	**-**
Luton & District Poultry Group	**75**	-	-	-	-	**75**
Restricted Other projects						
Somerset Conservation Fund	**2**	-	-	-	-	**2**
Conservation general	**3,094**	-	(526)	-	-	**2,568**
Foundation for Common Land	**-**	17,283	(15,115)	-	-	**2,168**
Farm Park - Princes Charities Fund	**7,187**	-	(1,482)	-	-	**5,705**
Epping Forrest - Fenceless Grazing	**59**	-	-	-	-	**59**
Northern Breeds - Raymond Moss Fund	**-**	5,000	-	-	-	**5,000**
	105,231	68,795	(40,527)	(18,010)	-	**115,489**

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	**Total**
	£	£	£	**£**
Fixed assets	1,059,627	2,162,660	-	**3,222,287**
Cash at bank and in hand	(37,578)	-	106,492	**68,914**
Other current assets / liabilities	73,031	-	8,997	**82,028**
Total	**1,095,080**	**2,162,660**	**115,489**	**3,373,229**

22 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans.

The charity operates a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. The amount recognised as an expense in the period was £15,700 (2022 - £13,986).

Leaving a gift in your Will could be the greatest difference you ever make!

Planning for the future

RBST depends heavily on voluntary donations. Without the incredible generosity of our members and supporters, we simply couldnít continue our vital work in research, conservation and saving rare breeds. We know that with the help of generous donors like you, RBST can continue striving to achieve its crucial goal, to ensure that the genetic diversity represented by our native breeds is safeguarded for many years to come. Our vision is a secure future for each of the UKís native breeds of livestock to ensure long-term food security, the conservation of important habitats and landscapes and the preservation of the UKís culture. Help ensure our native farm animals have a secure future and can be enjoyed by generations to come.

What to do?

If you have already made a Will but you are considering including a gift to RBST, your solicitor will advise you on the correct wording to update your Will. You will need to provide your solicitor with our charity details. For your convenience, we have provided this here:

The Rare Breeds Survival Trust, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG. (Registered Charity no. 269442).

Please also state that you wish to make the gift for the ëgeneral purposesí of Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

Our promise

RBST will always respect your privacy. Your information will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and we will never ask the amount of your legacy. We understand and respect that you will want to remember family and friends first when planning for the future, but we hope that once youíve taken care of your loved ones, youíll consider leaving a legacy gift in your Will, as a lasting way to support the future of RBST.

No Will yet?

Have you thought about leaving a gift in your Will to RBST? This year we have partnered with Free Wills Month. They bring together a group of well-respected charities to offer members of the public aged 55 and over, giving you the opportunity to support RBST and have a simple Will written or updated for free, by using one of their participating solicitors. The next campaign opens on 1st October 2021, you can register your interest here **www.freewillsmonth.org.uk/** and receive an email reminding you that the campaign has started. An up-to-date Will written by a solicitor ensures your wishes are respected. It also avoids difficult decisions and legal complications for your loved ones.

RBST
Rare Breeds Survival Trust

If you have any questions, visit our website, call 02476 69551 or email fundraising@rbst.org.uk.

Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST), Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LG
Registered Charity Number 269442 (England and Wales)

Corporate Directory

Charity Reference and Administrative Details: As at the date of this report

Charity registration number 269442
Company registration number 01204694

Patron
His Majesty King Charles III

President
Baroness Hayman of Ullock

Vice Presidents
Martin Beard
Miss Elizabeth Buchanan, C.V.O, FRAgS
J Alan C Black
The Earl De La Warr, DL
Jimmy Doherty
Lord Iliffe

Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Price

Trustees
John Atkinson
Tom Davis
James Fanshawe
Kate Green (term expired October 2023)
Catherine Le Grice-Mack
Steve McMinn
Prof Tim Morris (term expired October 2023)
Sir Roderick Newton (resigned February 2024)
Dr Martin Penny (appointed October 2023)
Ryan Perry
Alison Pope (term expired October 2023)
Dr James Prendergast (appointed October 2023)
Claire Saunders
Jan McCourt (appointed March 2024)
Tom Fairfax (appointed March 2024)
Claire Whittle (appointed March 2024)

Conservation and Research Committee
John Atkinson, Tom Davis, James Fanshawe, Catherine Le Grice-Mack, Ryan Perry, Claire Saunders, Steve McMinn, Marcus Bates (British Pig Association – in attendance), Dr James Prendergast
In attendance: Christopher Price (CEO), Tom Blunt, Andrea Parry-Jones, Jan McCourt, Tom Fairfax, Claire Whittle

Finance and Governance Committee
John Atkinson, Catherine Le Grice-Mack, Alison Pope,
In attendance: Christopher Price (CEO), Claire McNicol (Dir F&O), Steve McMinn, Jan McCourt, Tom Fairfax, Claire Whittle, Dr Martin Penny

Nomination Committee
Alan Black, Alison Pope, Martin Beard, Claire Saunders

Registered office
Avenue Q, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth,
Warwickshire, CV8 2LG

Auditor
Dafferns LLP
One Eastwood
Harry Weston Road
Binley Business Park, Binley
Coventry, CV3 2UB

Legal advisors
Lodders LLP
10 Elm Court
Arden Street
Stratford upon Avon
Warwickshire, CV37 6PA

Bankers
Barclays Bank, 48/50 The Parade,
Leamington Spa CV32 4DD

Investment managers
Evelyn
45 Gresham Street,
London EC2V 7BG

Staff
Claire McNicol – Director of Finance and Operations and Company Secretary
Tom Blunt – Senior Conservation Advisor
Jo Linforth – Head of Members and Partnerships
Andrea Parry-Jones – Conservation Adviser
Rachel Peckover – Office Administrator and Accounts Assistant
Hannah Roberts - Office Administrator
Amy Foulkes - Event Coordinator

RBST is incredibly grateful for every single penny donated to its cause by members, donors and supporters, both individuals and organisations. RBST simply would not exist without their generosity.

Whilst we would like to be able to thank everyone by name, due to space and data protection limitations this is not possible.

We would however like to take the opportunity to make special reference to the Trusts who donated funds to RBST in 2023 and all those who so kindly remembered RBST in their Wills.

Trust Income Received 2023

Dingwall Trust

The Ancaster Trust
Registered Charity Number 270822

The Duncan Norman Trust Fund
Registered Charity Number 250434

Bernard Sunley Foundation
Registered Charity Number 1109099

The Stuart & Margaret Miller Charitable Trust
Registered Charity Number SC030120

The Hutchinson Charitable Trust
Registered Charity Number 1155643

The Carron Charitable Settlement
Registered Charity Number 289164

HR Bull Charitable Trust
Registered Charity Number 296133

Mrs D M France-Hayhurst Foundation
Registered Charity Number 1160394

The William Dean Countryside Fund
Registered Charity Number 1044567

Privy Purse Charitable Trust
Registered Charity Number 296079

The Horserace Betting Levy Board

Legacy Income Received 2023

Cynthia Mary **MORRIS**

Elaine May **SHOWAN**

Nicola Sally **BOULD**

Susan Elizabeth **FOSTER**

June Iris **TYRIE**

RBST's Corporate Supporters

Birch Farm

White Park Financial Solutions

Skyeskyns Ltd

Yorkshire Agricultural Society

South of England Agricultural Society

Marsh Charitable Trust

Peter Hunter Seeds Ltd

Edge & Son Butchers

Devon Duvets

Dumfries House Home Farm Ltd

Dengie Crops Ltd

Little Beau Sheep

Kelly Bronze Turkeys

Royal Ulster Agricultural Society

Old Hall Farm Woodton

Incredible Eggs Franchise Ltd

Wychwood Farm

Statkraft

Swaledale Butchers

The Real Wild Estates Company

& Glebe Meadow Fishery

RBST
Rare Breeds Survival Trust

rbst.org.uk *enquiries@rbst.org.uk* *024 7669 6551*

The former Prince of Wales was Patron

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#NativeBreedsForModernNeeds